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NAME OF AUTHOR/*NOM DE L'AUTEUR* Carol Elaine Anderson

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NAME OF SUPERVISOR/*NOM DU DIRECTEUR DE THÈSE* Dr. Allan Vaider Wall

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

by

© CAROL E. ANDERSON

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "An Investigation of the Marriage Enrichment Program"

submitted by Carol E. Anderson

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

Supervisor

Date December, 1975

Dedicated to

Mary and Errol,

my parents,

who taught me that

love

in marriage

grows

from mutual

respect and admiration.

ABSTRACT

The increasing emphasis on the relationship aspects of marriage has been accompanied by the need for more effective ways of communicating within the marital dyad. In response, programs primarily concerned with enriching functioning marriages have emerged in recent years. The main focus of the current study has been to investigate the effect of one such program, the Marriage Enrichment Program (MEP) on 19 couples who took the MEP during February and March of 1974. Thus the literature reviewed has outlined the historical and theoretical antecedent of the marriage enrichment movement, as well as presented some models of programs and related research.

Although 19 couples commenced the six-week program, two were excluded from the study as they did not complete the initial set of instruments. The remaining 34 participants ranged in age from 19 years to 54 years and were involved in their dyadic relationships from one to 21 years. A variety of occupations were represented.

The data for the investigation were obtained from three relationship inventories and one personality inventory which were completed before the commencement of the MEP and again on its completion. The relationship inventories were chosen for their relevance to the goals of the MEP. A followup questionnaire, designed by the writer, was sent out six months after the MEP in order to obtain the participants' view of the program.

Findings obtained from the inventories and the followup questionnaire have been reported separately. However, a following discussion on differences occurring among the participant couples has employed

information from both the inventories and the followup questionnaire.

An examination of the findings obtained from the inventories revealed a significant increase on two of the relationship inventories. No significant increase occurred on the third relationship inventory or on the personality inventory.

Comments from the followup questionnaire respondents indicated that they regarded the MEP as an effective program and that they had continued to use some of the communication skills learned in the program. Group leaders were evaluated as the most useful aspect of the MEP, followed closely by the in-session exercises and the log book.

Discussion of differences among the participant couples of this MEP investigation has indicated that a few couples' needs were more appropriate to therapy than to an enrichment program. It has been suggested that one of the relationship instruments might be employed in screening applicants for the MEP. However, since some of these couples found the MEP useful and constructive, use of the program as a supplement to therapy has been suggested.

It was concluded that the effects of the MEP were constructive, though not always enriching for the participants of this study. The limitations of the current investigation have indicated the need for experimental studies on marriage enrichment programs. Further, the concept of what constitutes a functioning marriage needs to be clarified possibly through use of observational methods in long-term studies.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The technological innovations of the twentieth century have been accompanied by social changes which have altered the structure of many social institutions, including that of marriage. As Nina and George O'Neill (1973) indicate, the rigid closed system of the utilitarian type of marriage was functional in a relatively unchanging agrarian culture, but no longer functional in our highly mobile, industrialized society. The technology which has freed many men and women from the necessity of long hours of physical labour to ensure survival, has provided them with both the opportunities and the resultant hazards of relating to one another as persons. Consequently, marriage is increasingly entered into as a means of maintaining a satisfying interpersonal relationship, rather than simply as a utilitarian contract involving the exchange of goods and services.

Background--The Emergence of Marriage as a Relationship

Emerging Roles and Functions of Marriage

Congruent with viewing marriage as the core of the family unit, much of the research and literature on marriage has focused on the functions of the marital institution that relate to the economic support of the family, maintenance of the household, kinship contacts and the bearing and socializing of children. It was assumed that fulfillment of

these functions occupied the major part of the time and energy of the marital partners for most of their adult life and that the consequent division of these functions along sex role lines was most appropriate and efficient. Thus traditionally, the husband was seen as responsible for providing the economic support of the family as well as dispensing occupational and religious knowledge in an authoritarian manner during the socializing of children (Nye & Berardo, 1973). Conversely, the wife was responsible for the care of the household and the nurturance of children.

However, in response to the changing demands of an urbanized, industrialized society, the more traditional functions and roles are changing in their nature and functions and roles pertaining to the interpersonal relationship of the marital partners are becoming normatively sanctioned. Generally, marriage, like the family, is becoming more equalitarian with traditional functions being fulfilled with less division according to sex role and emerging roles being the responsibility of both partners, regardless of sex. Nye (1974) designed a study to assess the existence of three emerging roles for men and two for women of which two (the therapeutic and the sexual roles) are pertinent to this study. He found that both sexes expect their own sex to assist the other "in the solution of any problem which may be bothering that person" (p. 239) which he defines as the "therapeutic role". Most of his sample strongly disapproved of a person failing to fulfill this role and 80 percent of the wives and 63 percent of the husbands actively participated in this role according to their spouses. Similarly, about 90 percent of both sexes see it as a duty to meet the sexual needs of the other, with 68 percent of the wives and 81 percent

of the husbands strongly disapproving of a spouse who rarely or never consents. Husbands' responses to wives' needs closely correspond to the sanctions, whereas 30 percent of the wives never or occasionally respond. The existence of the norms and sanctions by wives, according to Nye, indicates the emergence of a sexual role for males while this sexual availability has always been required of females.

Further it is evident that the trends toward increased role sharing and increased importance of the expressive and companionship aspects of marriage have been going on for some time. There is more role crossing done by couples of each successive generation according to the findings of three-generational studies (Brigante, 1972; Hill, 1969). When compared with parent and grandparent generations, younger couples have more open and effective communication, especially in the resolution of conflict (Hill, 1969) and value more the companionship aspects and the sharing of expressive functions in marriage (Fengler, 1973). Additionally, some recent research indicates that marriages having these characteristics are better for the partners and promote the stability of the marriage. Thus Pratt (1972) found that marriages characterized by a relatively equalitarian power pattern, less sex role differentiation and a high degree of companionship had a higher level of health and appropriate use of health services than marriages with unequal power, strict sex role differentiation and lower companionship. Similarly, couples seeking marital counselling were significantly less equalitarian in role expectations than couples not seeking counselling (Anderson, 1973).

The Importance of Communication Skills

The increased flexibility demanded of more equalitarian role sharing would seem to require the communication skills inherent in the therapeutic role which Nye hypothesizes as emerging. As many writers in the field of marriage relationship have noted, our current socialization and educational practices, while changing, by no means adequately equip people with the necessary communication skills to fulfil this role (Hacker, 1957; Hill, 1969; O'Neill & O'Neill, 1973). Thus young couples may anticipate and expect a mutually satisfying relationship, sexual and otherwise, but may be unable to behave and communicate in such a way as to realize this type of relationship. While facilitative and constructive communication skills are not currently good criteria of either marital success or expected marital happiness, they are required of a certain type of marital union characterized by role-sharing, individual personal growth of the marital partners and high valuing of the relationship aspects of marriage. Such marriages are variously described as the relationship-in-depth (Mace, 1972) the vital and total relationships (Cuber and Harrof, 1966) and the rhythmic relationship (Shostrom and Kavanaugh, 1971).

In line with the increased emphasis on the relationship aspect of marriage over the economic and child-rearing roles and functions, research on the dynamics of marital relationships is increasingly influenced by the systems theory approaches to interpersonal communication (Haley, 1963; Lederer and Jackson, 1968; Satir, 1972; Shostrum and Kavanaugh, 1971; Watzlewick, Beavin and Jackson, 1967). This view presents marriage as a relationship in which the individual systems of behavior of the partners interact, with each partner's behavior affecting

the other's. Thus a marital dyad will be characterized by a systematic way of communicating which will vary from couple to couple. Some ways of communicating facilitate individual growth and increase the quality of the relationship, while others tend to impede individual growth and be characterized by a cyclical static quality of relationship (see Raush, Barry, Hertel and Swain, 1974). While no one pattern of communicating can be equated with marital happiness or stability, Raush et al. (1974) did find that the "discordant" couples of their sample were more coercive and less cognitive, conciliatory and supportive than other sample couples in the resolution of conflicts. Significantly the three couples separated or divorced in the four to seven year follow-up of the original sample were in the discordant group. Further the researchers suggest that the couples who have "communication styles that foster conjoint learning and a continued evolution of the relationship offer special scope for the future" (p. 211) in that they are likely more able to competently meet the demands and opportunities of a rapidly changing world.

The Marriage Enrichment Program--Providing Skills for Continuing Relationships

It is from the preceding background outline of the changing nature of marriage and the concomittant need for communication skills that such programs as the Marriage Enrichment Program (MEP) have emerged in recent years (Appendix A). The existence of and public response to the MEP suggest that some couples are seeking more from their marriages than the long-term stability which has commonly been equated with marital success.

In that the educational and socialization processes experienced by most persons usually have not equipped them with the requisite communication skills to promote the individual and dyadic growth of a relationship centered marriage, the MEP serves an educational purpose in providing an environment where these skills can be acquired and practiced.

The MEP, offered through the Family Life Education Council of Edmonton, is a six-session course which specifically aims at increasing the quality of already functioning marriages. A married couple, trained to conduct the MEP, lead a group of four to six couples through the sessions which follow the format developed by Dr. E. Branch, former Director of the Family Life Educational Council. The exercises in each session are designed to aid couples in developing constructive ways of communicating on a person-to-person basis, rather than in conformity to marital roles, however they perceive these. Although the primary focus is on sharing the positive aspects of the relationship, the program also aims at increasing understanding of and flexibility in dealing with conflicts and differences as an alternative to forcing agreement as a solution. Specifically the goals of the MEP are to increase awareness of what the individuals value about themselves, their marital partners and their relationship, as well as to increase their skills in expressing positive feelings and thoughts.

Purpose of this Thesis

Since marriage enrichment types of programs are relatively recent in origin, little research to date has been conducted on them. It was

the original intent of the writer to run an experimentally designed study with an experimental group of couples participating in the MEP, and a similar sized control group, with both groups completing the same test instruments before and after the duration of the program. However none of the couples interested in the MEP agreed to delay taking the program until a later date and efforts to obtain a control group through advertising were unsuccessful at the time. Consequently it was decided to proceed with a descriptive study involving the couples who participated in this particular MEP as it was thought that a study of this exploratory nature could still contribute information to this recently developed field.

The sample involved nineteen couples from Edmonton and environs who voluntarily participated in the MEP during February and March of 1974. Since this program proposes to increase the incidence of person-to-person relating between the partners, the couples were tested both prior to and immediately following the six-week program with instruments designed to measure the type of relationship, the amount of self-disclosure of the marital partners and their personalities. Finally, a questionnaire, developed by this writer, requesting each individual's perception of the effectiveness of the program, was completed six months following the termination of the MEP. Specifically, this study describes some effects of the MEP on this particular group of participants. In doing so it potentially provides direction for controlled experimental research on the effectiveness of this program.

Overview

While the purpose of this thesis has been introduced in Chapter I, subsequent chapters have dealt with the relevant literature and research, the design and the findings of the current investigation. In Chapter II some literature and research have been presented concerning the contributions made by the human potential movement, group therapy and systems theory to the development of the marriage enrichment movement. Also included in Chapter II are two models of marriage enrichment programs, one of which is the MEP and relevant research on marriage enrichment types of programs. Characteristics of the MEP group investigated and the methodology employed in the current study have been indicated in Chapter III. Findings of the investigation, described in Chapter IV, have been summarized in Chapter V which concludes with implications for use of the MEP and further investigation of marriage enrichment.

CHAPTER II

SOME RELEVANT LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Theoretical Framework of the Marriage Enrichment Movement

Historical Overview

During the past few years an increasing number of courses pertaining to the improvement of the marital relationship have been offered to the general public. The response and participation of people has been widespread and consistent enough to result in the founding of such international organizations as the Association of Couples for Marriage Enrichment and more recently, the Council of Marriage Enrichment Organizations (Mace and Mace, 1975). While professionals in the field of marriage and the family have been instigators and participants in such organizations, much of the active membership is composed of non-professionally trained persons. The existence of significantly large numbers of couples who have been involved in seeking ways to qualitatively improve their marriages indicates that a popularly based "marriage enrichment movement" has been developing.

While the origin of the term "marriage enrichment" is uncertain, it conceptualizes the belief that marital relationships can be improved. For purposes of the present investigation, "marriage enrichment" has been used to embody the concept of "unappropriated resources in a

husband-wife relationship that can be developed to increase the couple's fulfillment and to improve their family life" (Mace and Mace, 1975, p. 2).

Although the marriage enrichment movement has been the product of many sources, the original attempts to provide services of this nature to the public were initiated by religious groups concerned over the rising rate of marriage and family breakdown (Mace and Mace, 1975). As David and Vera Mace (1975) have indicated, Marriage Encounter was begun by Father Gabriel Calvo in 1958 under the auspices of the Catholic Church of Spain. While religious groups have also been active participants in marriage enrichment in North America, the movement here has grown out of the human potential movement, especially as manifested in encounter groups.

For the most part, marriage enrichment types of groups have developed outside of the agencies offering professional services primarily because these services, of necessity, have been geared to the remediation of dysfunctioning marriages and families. While professionals in psychiatry, psychology, sociology and social work have long engaged in the study and the treatment of marital dyads and family groups, their direct contributions to and active participation in the marriage enrichment movement began subsequent to its emergence as a popularly based movement. However, some of the theories and therapeutic practices developed by professionals have influenced the structure of marriage enrichment groups as well as the content of their programs. These influences have been discussed in more detail in the following sections.

The Influence of the Human Potential Movement

The marriage enrichment movement has been influenced by the human potential movement in two ways. Firstly, the belief that the potential for constructive growth and change is an integral part of healthy human functioning is common to both movements. Secondly, marriage enrichment programs have made frequent use of group settings and methods developed to facilitate individual growth and change.

The concept of mental health espoused by the human potential movement was developed by "third force psychology" (Maslow, 1968). Psychological theorists in this tradition have postulated that the potential for growth and change throughout life is as important to healthy human functioning as the absence of pathological symptoms. Furthermore, it was suggested that many socially acceptable beliefs and practices applied in familial, educational and social institutions actually discouraged the development of human potential and contributed to psychological distress (Carkhuff and Berenson, 1967; Maslow, 1968; Rogers, 1951). Consequently, the characteristics of satisfactory psychological adjustment were seen as descriptive of an incomplete concept of healthy human functioning. Thus, from a human potential perspective, many so-called normal or adjusted people have functioned at a deficiency level of motivation (Maslow, 1968) due to incomplete development, although they have been more growth-motivated than neurotic or psychotic individuals.

The consequent belief that normally functioning people can benefit both themselves and others by developing further awareness and understanding of themselves has been characteristic of the literature and activities of the human potential movement.

As Mace and Macé (1975) have indicated, the terms "marital growth", "marital Potential" and "marital health" embody the same concept as marriage enrichment. Thus, the types of relationships described as "enriching" or "healthy" have required that the partners become healthily functioning individuals. The ideal relationships described by Lederer and Jackson (1968), Mace (1972) and Shostrom and Kavanaugh (1971) promote the continuing growth of the individuals within the parameters of a marital contract. All these writers have implied that self-awareness and self-acceptance underlie the ability and willingness to constructively communicate, the latter being essential to marital health (Mace, 1972).

Many of the methods used to encourage the development of human potential resulted from the adaptation of therapeutic theories and techniques to meet the needs of normal or adjusted populations. One such method, popularly identified with the human potential movement, is the use of the group setting to facilitate personal growth and interpersonal communication. As a result of the simultaneous growth in the use of groups for therapeutic and growth purposes, the theories and methods of therapy and growth groups overlap a great deal (Shaffer and Galinsky, 1974). Since marriage enrichment programs have found group methods especially appropriate to achieving their goals, the issues involved in the treatment of marital dyads in therapeutic groups has been considered in the next section.

The Treatment of Marital Dyads in Groups

Therapy and growth groups. The distinction between therapy and growth groups has been clarified more by the people each serves rather

than by methodology or theoretical origins. Shaffer and Galinsky (1974) have distinguished "group psychotherapy" from growth and development" or "human relations" groups by indicating that the latter:

> are not specifically designed for the rehabilitation of people suffering from specific psychological or psychiatric symptoms, but instead for relatively normal people who are looking for an experience that will enhance their personal living, particularly as it involves relating to others. (p. 11)

While it has been common to identify human relations groups, (Banman; Shaffer and Galinsky, 1974) with ahistorical treatment approaches and use of nonprofessionals as group leaders or facilitators, these methods have been employed in therapy groups as well (Guerney, 1969).

Marriage enrichment groups have been an application of human relations groups for the purpose of enhancing already functioning marital relationships (Mace and Mace, 1975). Such groups, a relatively recent phenomenon of the human potential movement, have largely developed outside of the confines of group therapy for married couples. Consequently, the research investigating the possible obstacles and difficulties of treating marital couples in groups has been conducted with therapy groups. Since these findings carry implications for marriage enrichment groups, they have been briefly considered following.

Research on group therapy with married couples. As a result of the influence of psychoanalytic theory on therapy, the treatment of married couples in groups was not attempted to any extent until the 1950's (Blinder and Kirschenbaum, 1967). However, once married couples groups were begun, the anticipated impediments did not materialize. Thus, such phenomena as complicated unworkable transference reactions, avoidance of taboo subjects and overt hostility between partners,

either within or outside of the group, did not occur, or were of little influence on the groups (Blinder and Kirschenbaum, 1967; Neubeck, 1954; Von Emde Boas, 1962). Similarly, the fears that the individual couples might inhibit the group process by defensive pairing, or that the group might precipitate premature dissolution of the marriage, also proved unfounded (Blinder and Kirschbaum, 1967; Flint, 1962). Indeed, the groups and the couples acted in a mutually supportive manner providing a safe environment for the individuals to explore their perceptual and communication errors, their reciprocally fed anxieties and to begin to establish the bases for a healthy intimacy. This in turn promoted the emergence of the marital partners as individuals (Blinder and Kirschenbaum, 1967; Boyer, 1960; Leichter, 1962).

The findings of these earlier therapists had the effect of shifting the focus of treatment from the pathology of individuals to the dynamics of the marital relationship. Thus, Von Emde Boas (1960) suggested that similar groups conducted with less disturbed or normal couples could "throw light on marriage and its problems" (p. 152). Papenek (1971) has indicated that the group setting elicits the couples' regular pattern of behaving because it more closely simulates the actual living situation than individual therapy does. Through focusing on the dysfunctional aspects of the marital relationship, therapists and researchers of couples' therapy groups have developed a rationale descriptive of the dysfunctioning relationship rather than the dysfunctioning individual (Blinder and Kirschenbaum, 1967; Cohn, 1969).

In summary, the use of group therapy for married couples has contributed to the emergence of marriage enrichment groups in two basic ways. Firstly, the positive experiences of both therapists and

participants indicated that the group process could be effectively used with married couples without destruction of the relationships or the group. Secondly, the subsequent development of a rationale pertaining to the dynamics of dysfunctioning marital relationships has contributed to the development of a rationale applicable to all types of marital relationships. Such a rationale developed by theorists who follow a systems approach to human relationships has been discussed in the following section.

The Systems Approach to the Marriage Relationship

General system theory has provided a theoretical base for the discovery of isomorphic principles governing phenomena in all sciences (Bertalanffy, 1968). In the social sciences, system theory has contributed a framework for viewing the complexities of human interaction. By viewing man and his social structures as systems, social scientists have utilized general system theory to describe the processes which maintain such systems (Bertalanffy, 1968; Buckley, 1967; Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson, 1967).

In the study of marriage and family institutions, systems theory approaches have sought to deal with the patterns of behavior which occur in these systems. As a result, literature has increasingly focused on describing the dynamic patterns of interaction in both functioning and dysfunctioning marital and family systems (Haley, 1963; Jackson and Budin, 1968; Laing, Phillipson and Lee, 1966; Lederer and Jackson, 1968; Raush, Barry, Hertel and Swain, 1974; Satir, 1972; Shostrum and Kavanaugh, 1971; Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson, 1967). By focusing on the processes that maintain these systems, several different types of

marital and family systems have been found to be stable and some to be unstable (Kantor and Lehr, 1975; Lederer and Jackson, 1968; Raush et al., 1974). Each type of system has been characterized by a pattern of interaction among its members and some patterns foster breakdown of the system, while others promote its continuance (Kantor and Lehr, 1975; Lederer and Jackson, 1968; Raush et al., 1974; Shostrum and Kavanaugh, 1967).

A major consequence of the systems approach to the marital relationship has been a shift in research on marital satisfaction from concentrating on the individual personality traits and appropriate sex-role identification as sources of criteria to the interpersonal perception of the partners (Dymond, 1954). Thus, Tharp (1963) indicated that marital satisfaction is not so much dependent on measured likeness of personalities or adherences to appropriate sex roles as it is "a function of the satisfaction of needs and/or expectations specific to husband and wife roles" (p. 115) whatever the partners conceive these to be. While research at that time revealed that most people perceived husband and wife roles as sex-differentiated along the instrumental-expressive dimension (Parsons and Bales, 1955) Tharp (1963) suggested that many marriages did not conform to these principles. Subsequent research by Nye (1974) has suggested that normatively sanctioned roles are becoming less sex-differentiated. These role changes have perhaps created a need for more explicit communication skills in order that marital partners may become aware of and share their expectations and needs, as these may not be as frequently mutually compatible as was the case in the past (Hobart and Klausner, 1959).

The role of communication in marriage. As Bertalanffy (1968) has indicated, "the various symbolic universes . . . which distinguish human cultures from animal societies are part and easily the most important part of man's behavior system" (p. 216). Man's ability to communicate is a function of his symbolic representation of the world and one of the most important processes operant in a marital relationship is that of communication (Mace, 1972; Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson, 1967). Whether a marriage is happy or unhappy, socially approved or disapproved, placid or turbulent, it has a characteristic pattern of communication which can either promote its continuance as a system or foster its dissolution (Kantor and Lehr, 1975; Raush et al., 1974; Watzlawick et al., 1967).

Research conducted on marital and family communication patterns has supported the hypothesis that some patterns are destructive while others are constructive. In a study of disclosure of feelings in marriage, Levinger and Senn (1967) found that non-therapy couples more frequently made pleasant disclosures on important issues than unpleasant, while therapy couples made an equal number of pleasant and unpleasant disclosures. Navran (1967) found that compared to unhappily married couples, the happily married couples of his sample communicated more with each other, especially about pleasant subjects, felt they were understood by and were sensitive to each other and kept communication channels open. Similarly, Bienvenu (1970) found that "some feelings and attitudes are destructive when communicated" (p. 28). He further indicated that fear of partner's anger, anxiety about the security of the marriage, use of nagging and insults and communicating double messages were characteristic of troubled marriages, whereas participation in

outside mutual interests and deliberate efforts to communicate were characteristic of couples with a good relationship. In family systems, Alexander (1973) found that normal families demonstrated high rates of reciprocal supportiveness in their communications and low rates of reciprocal defensiveness, while the reverse was true for disintegrating families.

The previous findings have suggested that satisfying marriages and families manifest mutually supportive communication patterns as indicated by a willingness to communicate, the frequent sharing of positive feelings and attitudes and a sensitivity to the feelings of others.

While there has been widespread agreement that constructive communication is an integral aspect of satisfying marital relationships, the efforts to impart the communication skills or to improve the marriage by many of such skills have produced equivocal results. While Hinkle and Moore (1973) concluded that couples participating in a student couples program benefited from acquiring and practising communication skills, Van Zoost (1973) found that his sample of six couples did not significantly improve on measures of effective consistency or interpersonal communication, although they did significantly increase on measures of self-disclosure and knowledge of communication. However, Van Zoost suggested that greater critical self-awareness as a result of participating in the program, subsequently confirmed by participants, could have lowered post-test interpersonal communication scores. Of 20 couples referred by conciliation court, the ten treated in a counseling group changed more on a semantic differential measure of communication and also had a greater reconciliation rate than ten couples who completed a programmed course designed to improve communication (Hickman and Baldwin, 1971).

The authors suggested that failure to participate in the optional part of the programmed course, which explored the affective domain, allowed couples to avoid confronting many mechanisms necessary to sound communication. Subsequently, Pierce (1973) using Carkhuff's method of training interpersonal skills, which includes the practice of appropriately modeled communication skills, found that couples with deteriorated marriages so treated improved significantly in communication skills over similar couples treated with traditional insight therapy.

In conclusion, research cited has supported the contention that constructive communication is important to maintain satisfying marital relationships. The studies focusing on the acquisition of constructive communication skills employed a variety of research designs and treatment methods which preclude comparing their results. However, Hickman and Baldwin's (1971) findings suggest that the counselling group setting is a more important factor in changing communication patterns than the use of a programmed course where key issues could be avoided. Further, Pierce's (1973) results indicate that the practice of communication skills is more effective than simple insight therapy. Significantly, marriage enrichment programs have made widespread use of both the group setting and modelling techniques as a means to improving both the communication and the personal satisfaction of marriages.

Systems theory and family life education. The offering of educative programs in family life to the general public has been a response to the radical social changes accompanying the development of a complex, technologically sophisticated society. As Buckland (1972) has indicated, these changes have imposed "new demands and stresses" but also have offered "new alternatives for families" (p. 151). While

expectations of marriage and family life have altered, the socialization process and educational programs have tended to perpetuate the belief that only the traditional forms of marriage and family are deserving of being so named. As a result, many people lack the skills and awareness either to cope with the stresses of current family life or to take advantage of the alternatives open (O'Neill and O'Neill, 1973; Vincent, 1966). More specifically, the greater emphasis on companionship and egalitarian roles in marriage and belief in democratic participation in families, requires a level of self-awareness and ability to constructively communicate that was not necessary in the more traditional authoritarian marital and family units.

In order to attempt to remedy the deficits in the educational and socialization processes, many programs have developed which can be encompassed by the term "family life education". In addition to marriage enrichment programs which Mace and Mace (1975) indicate are offered by fourteen national organizations and as yet unnumbered local organizations, many programs on more effective parenting have developed, of which those of Driekurs and Soltz (1964) and Gordon (1970) have become popularly known. (See Robertson (1976) for a review of the literature on parent education.) Although such programs have hoped to prevent marital and family breakdown, they also frequently are used to foster individual and interpersonal growth as part of the goal of improving marital and family systems.

More recent attempts to provide a theoretical base for family life education have employed systems theory, both as part of their rationales and as a means to operationalize their predominantly humanistic goals (Branch, 1973; Buckland, 1972; Daly and Reeves, 1973; O'Neill and O'Neill, 1973). Thus Branch (1973) has defined the healthy family in systems

terms as an open system which is dependent on effective communication for its maintenance. From another perspective, Buckland (1972) employed systems theory in the development of a model to evaluate parent education programs. Both writers have a humanistic perspective and have found the systems theory definition of open systems admirably suited to the growth motivated concept of man's basic nature. Consequently, the marriage enrichment programs discussed in the following section have developed from using systems theory to provide an appropriate theoretical framework through which to operationalize the humanistic goal of more effective and personally satisfying marital relationships.

Some Models of Marriage Enrichment Programs

Generally, marriage enrichment programs have been run as human relationships training groups (Bammen, 1974) for couples not requiring therapy but who wish to improve the quality of their marital relationships. Formats have commonly been highly structured with a set program of exercises and homework assignments aimed at increasing the interpersonal understanding and/or communication skills of the participants. Most programs have emphasized the sharing of both positive and negative feelings and thoughts with the goals of firstly increasing the couples' awareness of how they communicate and secondarily presenting the couple with the opportunity of acquiring new and more effective skills in constructively communicating (Clarke, 1970; Hinkle and Moore, 1973; Miller, Nunnally and Wackman, 1971, 1972; Nadeau, 1971; Nunnally, Miller and Wackman, 1975; Rappaport, 1971). It has been anticipated that the knowledge and skills potentially gained from marriage enrichment courses

can provide a couple with the tools with which they may constructively explore and change their relationship.

A Communication Model

Of all the programs developed for the purposes of improving the marital relationship, the Minnesota Couples Communication Training Program (MCCP) has the most thorough-going theoretical base in systems theory, particularly as it is applied to communication patterns (Miller, Nunnally and Wackman, 1971, Ch. 3). The authors have made it explicit that a couple is viewed as a system and that the "effectiveness of communication" (p. 3) is one of the major factors determining how well the system works. Consequently, the program has been designed to teach couples conceptual frameworks for examining their relationships as a system, in addition to teaching specific communication skills. The authors have indicated that "the overall goal of MCCT is to equip couples with abilities which will enable them to deal with issues in their relationship by themselves" (Miller, et al., 1971, p. 7).

The MCCP has aimed to teach couples how to communicate more effectively. Thus the program does not deal with specific family topics or issues, nor does it try to teach couples one particular pattern of relationship. Rather, by teaching specific communication skills within the context of conceptual frameworks, the program equips couples with the tools for understanding how their relationship functions and presents them with "alternative relationship patterns from which they may choose" (Miller, et al., 1971, pp. 6-7).

Prior to the program, each couple is interviewed and commonly negotiates a "maxi-contract" with the instructors "which indicates that

the couple understands the purpose and expectations of the program and that both members of the couple choose to involve themselves in the material and experiences presented" (Miller, Nunnally and Wackman, 1971, pp. 123-124). Since the program has been structured such that skills and frameworks become progressively more complex and comprehensive, attendance at all sessions is considered essential. Thus the maxi-contract's intent has been to provide each participant with an understanding of the program in order to ensure that marital partners are equally committed to participation.

The MCCP has been structured to provide time for both instruction and application of the communication skills during each session. In-session exercises and homework assignments primarily focus on the dyadic relationship. While the focus is not on the group as a whole, the group does provide a safe supportive environment and can be a source of models to illustrate different styles of communicating. In order to ensure that neither the instructor(s) nor the group pressures a couple into participation, a "mini-contract, a contract to work at this moment in this situation" (Miller et al., 1971, p. 128) can be employed. Thus the program provides a couple with the opportunity to learn and apply the communication skills in a manner that is appropriate to their particular relationship.

As indicated in the instructor's manual (Miller et al., 1971) the MCCP consists of four weekly sessions, each lasting three hours. In the first two sessions, through the use of the "awareness wheel" (Miller et al., 1971, p. 41) couples are first introduced to five different though interrelated cognitive processes, through which the individual orders information generated by both his own experiencing and by other people.

Participants subsequently learn that clarity in expressive self-awareness does not necessarily guarantee effective communication or a better relationship with another person. Thus, the skills of giving feedback and asking for feedback are introduced as means whereby assumptions can be checked out, information requested and understanding clarified. Finally, a framework is presented illustrating four different styles of communicating identified by a combination of low or high disclosure with low or high risk. Growth and change of the marital relationship is facilitated by use of the speculative (high disclosure, low risk) and open (high disclosure, high risk) styles of communication. However, in a healthy relationship all styles are used appropriately.

Since its inception, the MCCP has been both researched and revised by the developers of the program. The research cited in the Instructor's Manual (Miller et al., 1971, pp. 219-224) was conducted on 36 couples participating in the first version of the MCCP. The 19 couples in the experimental group and 17 control group couples were pre- and post-tested on measures of recall accuracy and work pattern communication. Data for the measures were obtained from two taped 5-minute discussions for each couple. A measure of recall accuracy was obtained by comparisons between the couples' responses to a questionnaire requiring each subject to recall "who used a specific kind of communication more often during the 5 minutes", with the actual behavior of each partner being assessed by an interaction scoring method developed for the study. The second taped discussion required couples to discuss things that each one did that irritated the other. A measure of work pattern communication was obtained using the Hill Interaction Matrix. On both measures the experimental group improved significantly more than the control group which had

no significant improvement on recall accuracy and actually decreased in work pattern communication. Thus participation in the MCCP appears to have increased use of skills which the program intended to teach.

The MCCP has been a prototype for programs endeavoring to improve the quality of marriage through more effective communication. ACME founders, David and Vera Mace, indicated the importance of communication to marital growth and specifically encouraged ACME chapter organizations to have a couple trained in the MCCP. The major limitation to its widespread use has been that program leaders must be trained by qualified MCCP instructors in order to ensure that instructors administering the program are themselves effective communicators with a good understanding of the theoretical frameworks.

The Marriage Enrichment Program (MEP)

The Marriage Enrichment Program (MEP) was developed by Branch during the time he was the Director of the Family Life Education Council of Edmonton (Appendix A). As does the MCCP, the MEP proposes to improve the quality of functioning marriages through teaching effective communication skills. However, the MEP is less comprehensive than the MCCP in that it does not teach theoretical frameworks. Rather, the program focuses on the basic skills of distinguishing thoughts and feelings and asking for and giving feedback. Further, the MEP specifically aims at increasing awareness and communication of the positive aspects of the marital relationship. In this way, it most closely resembles the Marital Enrichment Group (MEG) a program developed by C. Clarke of the University of Florida (Clarke, 1970; Nadeau, 1971). Both the goals and structure of the MEG were strongly influential in the development of

the MEP.

While the MEP is primarily designed to increase skills in communicating positive feelings and thoughts, it does not suggest that the negatives be denied. Negative feelings and thoughts are important aspects of effective communication. Partners are encouraged to directly express them when they do occur, with the understanding that such feelings and thoughts are informative rather than destructive. Similarly, couples are encouraged to deal with conflicts by understanding and accepting that they derive from differences in opinion and/or feelings that do not have to be resolved by forced agreement of one partner with the other. Communication of positive thoughts and feelings is the focus of the MEP simply because these are more often taken for granted and consequently go unexpressed in the marital relationship.

As in the MCCP, couples are interviewed prior to commencing the MEP to ensure understanding of and commitment to the program. They are then assigned to a group of four to six couples usually led by a trained married couple. During the first session of this six-session program, the exercises concentrate on distinguishing between thoughts and feelings. While the exercises emphasize the positive - what attracted each to the other and what aspects of the marital relationship are pleasing - couples are informed that the describing and sharing of negative feelings is also important. The homework assignment helps couples become aware of what behaviors communicate valuing of and respect for each other. In sessions 2 and 3 the skills of asking for and giving feedback are emphasized, again focusing on the behaviors that communicate caring as well as the feelings experienced while sharing these behaviors. During the fourth session the film "Sexuality and Communication" is shown (Chernick and

Chernick, 1971) illustrating how effective communication can bring more pleasure to this important aspect of the marital relationship. In the fifth session couples are made aware of the pleasure of shared sensuality through practice of a face and head massage (Downing, 1972). The final session aims at integrating the skills learned in the program. Both nonverbal and verbal exercises are employed for the purposes of having partners (a) share what has happened to each one and their relationship as a result of the program and (b) communicate a particular feeling about the partner. Finally, the group leaders ask for feedback on the program and the session closes with each person sharing his/her present feeling.

In addition to the in-session exercises and homework assignments, two instruments developed by Branch are used during the program. The "Two-to-One" game (1972) is used to begin the first session and provides the couples with the opportunity to explore how accurately each partner perceives the other. In a non-threatening way, the game can bring to the couple's attention those areas in their relationship in need of more effective communication. Similarly, the Loving Behavior Inventory (LBI) (Appendix B) checks the couple's congruence on the frequency of seven relationship behaviors which communicate valuing, respect, love for the partner. As it is commonly completed prior to the first session and after the third session, the LBI can serve as a device whereby the couple can monitor their change or lack of change in behaviors the program is designed to increase.

Because the MEP has not required the theoretical background which is part of the MCCP, couples without professional backgrounds have been trained as group leaders. Also, the program has appealed to couples from diverse economic, educational and professional backgrounds and whose ages

and duration of marriage vary widely (see sample description, Chapter III). This appeal to all ages is possibly due to the program's positive focus, which may be more favorably regarded by older couples in long established marriages than a program which purports to deal with all aspects of marital communication. However, as with other marriage enrichment programs, participation in the MEP has not guaranteed increased marital satisfaction or harmony. While the skills imparted are intended to increase a couple's potential for personal development and relationship growth, the awareness and skills can help to surface hidden and unacknowledged differences which one or both partners may be unwilling to accept or mutually deal with. In fact, if more effective communication skills have revealed patterns which the partners have agreed are mutually destructive, it can be a positive move for them to agree to enter therapy or even to separate. While the orientation of the MEP has favored the continuance of marriages, the concept of marriage enrichment has given priority to the quality of the marital relationship over simple duration of marriage.

Some Related Research

Although marriage enrichment programs have enjoyed an increasing popularity in recent years, research has not yet accumulated on this relatively new field. Of the available studies, two have outlined programs (Clarke, 1970; Hinkle and Moore, 1973) and three have researched some of the effects of marriage enrichment programs (Bruder, 1973; Nadeau, 1971; Rappaport, 1971). The program described by Clarke (1970) is similar in format and purpose to the MEP, with the primary focus on communicating the positive aspects of marriage. Hinkle and Moore (1973) developed a

seven-session program which employed transactional analysis as a means of clarifying and identifying the interaction patterns in the marital relationship. In addition, this latter program devoted the last three sessions to the concepts and skills of constructive fighting. In both programs the participant couples were university students. Participants of these programs made mostly favorable comments about the programs and indicated that the communication skills were useful in their relationships.

The studies discerning the effects of marriage enrichment programs all reported more positive change for the experimental groups than for the control groups on various relationship and communication measures (Bruder, 1973; Nadeau, 1971; Rappaport, 1971). Both the Bruder (1973) and Rappaport (1971) studies hypothesized that the respective programs would improve marital communication and that this in turn would lead to greater satisfaction with the marital relationship. On the measure used, three of which were common to both studies, participants improved significantly in effective communication and reported greater satisfaction with the marital relationship. In Nadeau's (1971) study, the results indicated that compared with the control group, program participants had improved nonverbal communication skills, used less negative adjectives in self-description and expressed greater satisfaction with the qualities of their marital relationships. Two months later, a follow-up study was conducted on the experimental group omitting the communication scale. The only result contrary to expectations was a reported increased awareness of things related to the marital experience, which suggests that the most lasting effect of the MEG was to make participants less likely to take their relationship for granted.

As befits research in a recently developed field, the studies cited are not comparable, nor are their findings broadly inferential. Most of the programs used as treatment were developed in university settings and four of the studies drew their samples from undergraduate and graduate student populations (Clarke, 1970; Hinkle and Moore, 1973; Nadeau, 1971; Rappaport, 1971). Although Bruder's sample had a similar range of age and marital longevity to the present study, the participants were all from the same Catholic diocese. Instruments to assess the interpersonal communication and other processes of marriage as a relationship similarly have been recently developed. Some questionnaires and scales were developed specifically for a particular study and others available for more general usage have yet to acquire adequate validity and reliability. The present study also has been subject to the latter limitation but differs from previously cited studies primarily in that the MEP has been offered to the general public of Edmonton and environs through a voluntary agency.

While the goal of all marriage enrichment programs is to improve the quality of functioning relationships through teaching skills for more effective communication and interaction, both the methods of imparting these skills and the means of assessing the effectiveness of the methods are in the embryonic stage. Thus descriptive studies on specific programs at this time can provide a base for subsequent experimental, replicable research.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Description of MEP Group

Of the nineteen couples participating in the MEP at the time of this study, two couples completed so little of the required questionnaires that it was not possible to include them in the sample. Out of the 17 remaining couples, one couple was from Wetaskiwin and the remainder were Edmonton residents. As can be seen from Table 1, 26 of the 34 participants were under 35 years of age. The age range for women was 19 years to 46 years and men's ages ranged from 19 years to 54 years. Length of relationship (Table 2) varied from one year to 21 years. Three of the couples who had a relationship of less than 10 years were unmarried but had cohabited for one to two and one-half years. Although the MEP sample ranged widely in age and length of relationships, the majority were under 35 with relationships of less than 10 years in duration.

While a variety of occupations were represented, seven of the men were in professions requiring a university degree. Of the remaining 10 men, there were two students, two service managers, one mechanic, one forklift operator, one department manager and three who did not indicate their occupations. Seven women were employed full time in secretarial and clerical positions, two were students, five were homemakers and three did not indicate their occupations.

Table 1

Age of MEP Participants

Age	n
Under 20	2
20 - 24	4
25 - 29	10
30 - 34	10
35 - 39	2
40 - 44	2
45 - 49	2
Over 50	2
TOTAL	34

Table 2

Length of Relationships of MEP Couples

Years	n
Less than 10	12
10 - 19	3
More than 20	1
TOTAL	16[a]

[a]One couple did not indicate the length of their relationship

Instruments

The instruments used in this study were chosen for their relevance to the goals of the MEP. Three inventories refer to aspects of the male-female relationship. A personality inventory was employed to assess individual traits in contrast to relationship patterns. Finnally a questionnaire developed by the writer was used to obtain the participants' evaluation of the effects of the MEP.

The Pair Attraction Inventory (PAI)

The development of the PAI was influenced by the literature which suggests that there are both symmetrical and complementary relationship patterns (Lederer and Jackson, 1968; Watzlawich et al., 1967). Winch, Ktsanes and Ktsanes (1954) supported the theory that mate selection was based on complentary needs being met in the relationship. More recently, Cattel and Nesselroade (1967) found that both the stable and unstable married couples of his sample scored similarly on some personality factors and differently on others, suggesting the existence of both symmetrical and complementary needs. Thus the PAI ". . . is designed to measure both complentarity and symmetry in pair relationships". (Shostrum, 1971, p. 2). Further, Shostrum and Kavanaugh (1971) have hypothesized that in a healthy marriage, termed the rhythmic relationship, there is a flexible interchange of complementary and symmetrical needs.

> A rhythmic theory is advanced by the author who hypothecates that members of the actualizing pair respond to one another in a rhythmic or alteraction fashion. Correspondingly their reactions are not so rigid that they score excessively on any of the complementary and symmetrical scales. (Shostrum, 1971, p. 2).

The PAI contains 224 true-false items presented in contrasted pairs, each pair having one item describing the examiner's feelings about the other person, with the other item describing the other person's feelings about the examiner. Scoring procedures result in seven totals corresponding to scales A to G. Scales A through D represent four complementary relationships, sclaes E and F represent symmetrical relationships and G represents the Rhythmic relationship. The totals for each scale are transferred to a profile sheet for interpretation. The complete rationale of the seven scales has been developed in Between Man and Woman (Shostrum and Kavanaugh, 1971) but a brief description of each type of relationship follows.

Complementary relationships. The four scales A-D represent relationships in which the partners seek in each other what is missing or undeveloped in themselves. Each person assumes a complementary position to his/her partner on the love-anger dimension, or the weakness-strength dimension. While the resultant scales superficially suggest that one partner has more power or control over the other, each person is equally manipulative in getting his needs met.

In the Mother-Son pattern (scale A) the woman assumes the position of the stronger, more competent one in the relationship, caring for the man who assumes a more submissive role. Similarly, Scale B, the Daddy-Doll pattern has the man assuming the position of the competent strong father looking after and catering to the pretty, child-like woman.

Shostrum and Kavanaugh (1971) have described the Bitch-Nice Guy pattern (Scale C) as "the challenging relationship" since the woman in her attempts to be strong makes angry provocative demands on the man who

refuses to respond directly but frequently wins by his passive resistance. Finally, the Master-Servant pattern (Scale D) has been described as the educating relationship since the man assumes the role of educating the woman in her role of serving him and his household. She is firmly remonstrated for any failure in absolute compliance and is not entitled to voice opinions contrary to her husband's.

Symmetrical relationships. In these relationship patterns, two people with similar personalities and tactics are paired. Thus both partners are strong and dominating or weak and placating. In the first instance, the result is the "competitive marriage" (Shostrum, 1971) referred to as the "Hawks" pattern (Scale E) which is characterized by frequent angry confrontations. Conversely in the "Dove" pattern (Scale F) each partner continually attempts to please and yield to the other with the result that there is frequent indirect and double-binding communication which attends the denial of strength and anger.

The Rhythmic relationship. Shostrum (1971) has described this relationship as the "actualizing marriage" (p. 6). In a rhythmic relationship (Scale G) each person is able to spontaneously and appropriately express strength, weakness, anger and love.

> It is a relationship in which two interdependent persons relate to each other with freedom, rather than from neurotic need, and which depends upon each individual's capacity to be himself, to be authentic and to be interdependent. Marriage for these individuals provides a reinforcement for their individual identities. (Shostrum, 1971, p. 6)

Such a relationship requires that each partner be aware of and take responsibility for developing those aspects of himself that were not adequately developed previously. Thus the partners choose to be

together rather than need to be together and their interaction is characterized by a flexibility which fosters personal and interpersonal growth.

It has been assumed that while relationships A through F can be stifling or destructive, they are functional ways of relating for many couples and can provide a base for establishing a rhythmic relationship (Shostrum and Kavanaugh, 1971). According to the manual for the PAI (Shostrum, 1971) an actualizing couple will have a relatively low, flat profile on scales A through F with T scores hovering around 40, while the G scale score is between T scores of 50 and 60. Conversely a non-actualizing couple who may be experiencing marital difficulties will have an irregular profile with very high scores (T score over 60) on one or more scales and a low score on the G scale. However if the partners have similar profiles indicating that they perceive each other and themselves similarly, there is better potential for therapy than if their high scores are on different scales. "Couples who see each other differently on the PAI appear to have serious difficulty" (Shostrum, p. 7, 1971).

Validity and reliability. A preliminary validity study was conducted on the PAI with 170 couples, 89 of which were assessed as functioning while 81 were assessed as non-functioning. As predicted, the actualizing couples scored higher (T score 36) than the non-actualizing couples (T score 30) on the Rhythmic scale and the same or lower on all other scales. Thus the G score discriminated between functioning and non-functioning couples.

A subsequent validity study was conducted by F.L. Shostrum (1973)

using 69 couples, one male and 11 females who were seeing 30 therapists from a variety of professional backgrounds for the purposes of relationship counselling. Each therapist was given a written description of the seven PAI scales and requested to select the one scale he judged to be most descriptive of each client and his relationship to his partner. Each client completed a PAI on which the scale with the highest T score was considered to be most descriptive of the relationship. A chi square analysis of each scale was conducted in order to discern whether the agreement between the PAI peak T scores and the therapists' assessment of the relationship was significant. Five scales obtained chi squares with significance at or beyond the .001 level. Of the remaining two, the Dove scale's chi square did not quite obtain significance at the .05 level, while the chi square for the Daddy-Doll scale was so low that no significant relationship was indicated. Correlation of each scale with therapists' assessment revealed that four scales were highly correlated ($r = .78 - .93$) with the Bitch-Nice Guy scale moderately correlated at .49, the daddy-doll correlated at .36 and the Dove scale receiving a low negative correlation.

Test-retest reliability measures were obtained on the PAI scales using a sample of 65 college students (Shostrum, 1971). The correlation ranged from .78 to .93 with six scales having correlations of .87 or higher. Although the PAI has not yet been widely used, these preliminary studies have indicated that it is sufficiently reliable and valid to warrant its use, especially as a clinical instrument.

The PAI was used in this study primarily because it is a relationship inventory which purports to discriminate among different styles of male-female relationships. Further, the characteristics of the Rhythmic

relationship are congruent with the growth-motivated relationship which the MEP encourages.

The Loving Behavior Inventory (LBI)

The LBI (Appendix B) was developed by Branch (1974) to measure the incidence of these behaviors which the MEP specifically aims at increasing. The structure of the instrument follows the rationale developed in the book Interpersonal Perception (Laing, Phillipson and Lee, 1966). Each of the three pages contain seven items. Each item refers to a behavior in which the examinee, by circling a number on a seven-point scale, indicates how seldom or how often he engages. On the second page the examinee similarly answers the same seven items with reference to the frequency with which his partner engages in these behaviors and finally he indicates his perception of how frequently his partner sees the examinee engaging in these behaviors.

The LBI is scored by adding together the numbers circled on the seven items on each page separately, then summing the scores of all pages to obtain a total score. While each partner's scores on each page can be compared with the other's score on the following page (e.g., females score on page one with males scoring on page two) as a measure of interpersonal accuracy, each partner's total score can be used as a measure of the incidence of loving behaviors. The higher the total score, the greater the incidence of behaviors that the MEP is designed to teach.

The Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (SDQ)

Developed by Miller, Nunnally and Wackman, creators of the MCCP, the SDQ is designed to measure self-disclosure between marital partners.

Respondents answer the 20 items indicating how little or how much they share with their spouse by circling the appropriate number on a seven-point scale. The higher the total score the higher the self-disclosure in the marital dyad. Although little research has been conducted to establish the SDQ's validity and reliability, Branch (1974) indicated that internal consistency scores were around .90.

In reviewing the implications of self-disclosure research for group therapy, Allen (1973) found that there was more intra-sex self-disclosure than inter-sex self-disclosure except between marital partners. Also findings indicated a positive correlation between degree of self-disclosure and liking the target person. Finally self-disclosure encourages further self-disclosure.

The communication patterns fostered by the MEP involved self-disclosure in the sharing of thoughts and feelings about oneself and the relationship. Thus the SDQ was employed to measure the amount of self-disclosure in the marital dyads of the MEP couples.

The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF)

Forms C and D (1969) of the 16PF were administered to obtain a measure of participant's personality, in contrast to the previous three instruments which are designed to measure aspects of the dyadic relationship. Since the PAI contains 224 items, testing time was a factor in choosing a personality measure. With a total of 210 items, forms C and D (1969) are considerably shorter than any other widely used personality test.

Neither test-retest reliabilities nor validities were available on the 1969 C and D forms at the time of publication of the 16 Personality

Factor Handbook (Cattell, Eber and Tatsuoka, 1970). Equivalence coefficients on the factors for the older editions ranged from .16 on factor N to .51 on factor D, but test-retest reliabilities were not available for the older form. Direct construct validities for the older form ranged from .08 on N to .87 on H.

Follow-Up Questionnaire

Six months after completion of the MEP a fifteen-item questionnaire (Appendix D) developed by the writer, was mailed to all persons who completed the program requesting their assessment of the program. The intent of the questionnaire was to ascertain whether the goals of the program were attained from the participant's perspective. To this end the questions dealt with (a) the relative usefulness of aspects of the program, (b) perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program, (c) awareness of positive aspects of the relationship and (d) continued use of learned communication skills.

In order to ensure that the questions provided adequate scope for assessment of the MEP, the questionnaire was critiqued by Mr. C. Brown, Department of Educational Psychology. Subsequent to revision it was administered in person by the writer to a couple who had completed the MEP.

Procedure

The original 19 couples were briefly interviewed by E. Branch at Family Life Education Council in order to ensure that each couple understood the goals of the MEP and to inform them of the impending study of

the program. With regard to the latter, a $10.00 reduction of the $20.00 per couple fee was offered both as an incentive to participation in the study and in recognition of the rather lengthy time involved in completion of the instruments (1-1/2 to 2 hours per each administration). After the interview, couples completed four instruments--the PAI, the LBI, the SDQ and the 16PF.

Couples were randomly assigned to one of four groups, resulting in three groups of five couples and one group of four couples. Of the couples leading the groups, two were composed of lay persons who had participated in an MEP and subsequently trained as group facilitators for the program. Members of the remaining two couples were either psychologists or professionally trained in a related area, in addition to having been involved with the development of the MEP. Each group met once a week for 6 weeks, the first meeting being held within two weeks of the initial interview and testing. All groups followed the format of the MEP (Appendix A).

Upon completion of the sixth session participants were asked to complete the four instruments they had filled out prior to the sessions. The follow-up questionnaire (Appendix D) along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope was mailed to the couples six months after the last session.

Analysis of Findings

Initially, a t-test with correlated samples was done on the data from the PAI, SDQ, LBI and the 16PF comparing the test scores from before the MEP with those after the MEP. An additional t-test variance was

done to compare male and female scores on both sets of test results. Finally, as eight of the seventeen couples failed to complete or return the second set of tests, a one-way anova was done on the initial set of instruments comparing the eight couples with the nine who completed both sets.

The responses to the follow-up questionnaire were reported in relation to the goals of the MEP. Written comments to questions were summarized and tables were used where applicable.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

Due to the changes in the sample and the diversity of material provided by the MEP participants, the findings of this study are considered under four major headings. Sample Changes discusses the disposition of the original 34 MEP participants. The results of the analysis of the data from the PAI, SDQ, LBI and the 16PF are discussed under Statistical Findings. An overview of the follow-up questionnaire responses is discussed under The Participants Perspective of the MEP. Finally, individual cases are discussed under Differences Among MEP Couples.

Changes in the MEP Group

Of the 17 couples who completed the questionnaires before the MEP, two did not complete the program. One couple dropped out after the second session in order to enter therapy which they felt was more suited to their needs; the second couple discontinued attending after the first session, due to the wife's illness. While the remaining 15 couples completed the program, only nine returned the questionnaires distributed during the final session. In order to discern if there were any initial differences between the scores of those who completed both sets of

instruments and those who completed the initial set only, a chi square test for homogeneity of variance and a one-way analysis of variance were performed. The results indicated no significant differences existed between the groups at the initial testing stage. Thus it was assumed that the nine couples completing all of the questionnaires were representative of the couples completing the MEP and the data provided by these 18 subjects were analyzed and are discussed in the following section.

As can be seen from Table 3 all eight couples who failed to complete the final set of questionnaires were in the 20 to 29 or 30 to 39 age ranges. Further the two couples who dropped out of the program were in the 30 to 39 age range. Since age had not been considered in assigning participants to groups, the nine couples completing all the inventories represented the MEP groups unequally with only one couple responding from one of the groups, two couples from another and three couples each from the remaining two groups. Since the purpose of the study is to investigate the program rather than each MEP group, the data obtained from subjects were analyzed irrespective of groups in any case.

Statistical Findings

A t-test with correlated samples was performed on the data from the nine couples for the purposes of plotting profiles of mean scores for the PAI completed prior to and following the MEP and to see if there were any significant changes in mean scores, especially on the PAI Scale G, the LBI and the SDQ. An additional t-test was performed to assess if there were differences between male and female mean scores on the variables.

Table 3

Age of MEP Participants Completing Both Sets of Questionnaires

Age	n[a]
Under 20	2 (2)
20 - 29	6 (14)
30 - 39	4 (12)
40 - 49	4 (4)
Over 50	2 (2)
Total	18 (34)

n[a] Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of participants who completed the initial set of questionnaires.

The Relationship Inventories

A comparison of the couples' mean scores on the PAI completed before the MEP with the PAI completed after the program reveals that the score on the G scale significantly increased from 30.56 to 35.72 (see Table 4). The scale means were plotted on Figure 1 along with those of Shostrum's sample of functioning couples (Shostrum, 1971, p. 10). As can be seen, the pre-MEP scores are the same or within one point of the functioning couples' scores on four scales while the post-MEP scores attain this level of similarity on five scales. Both the pre- and post-MEP scores differ considerably from Shostrum's sample on the B and D scales.

Shostrum (1971) indicates that the G scale is considered "most relevant for measuring differences in actualization while the clinical diagnostic scales are most relevant for measurement of differences among couples" (p. 7). Figure 1 shows that the MEP couples scored similarly on

Table 4

Comparison of Pre-MEP and Post-MEP Scores on the Pair Attraction Inventory for Nine Couples

Scales	Pre-MEP		Post-MEP		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
A Mother-Son	17.94	8.5	18.67	8.46	.56
B Daddy-Doll	16.61	6.58	18.33	6.16	1.51
C Bitch-Nice Guy	16.11	7.55	16.22	8.41	.10
D Master-Servant	13.11	5.45	15.39	7.66	1.49
E Hawks	9.28	7.24	8.17	8.29	-.72
F Doves	19.94	6.21	21.06	7.36	.84
G Person-Person	30.56	9.54	35.72	5.94	3.49*

*$p < .005$

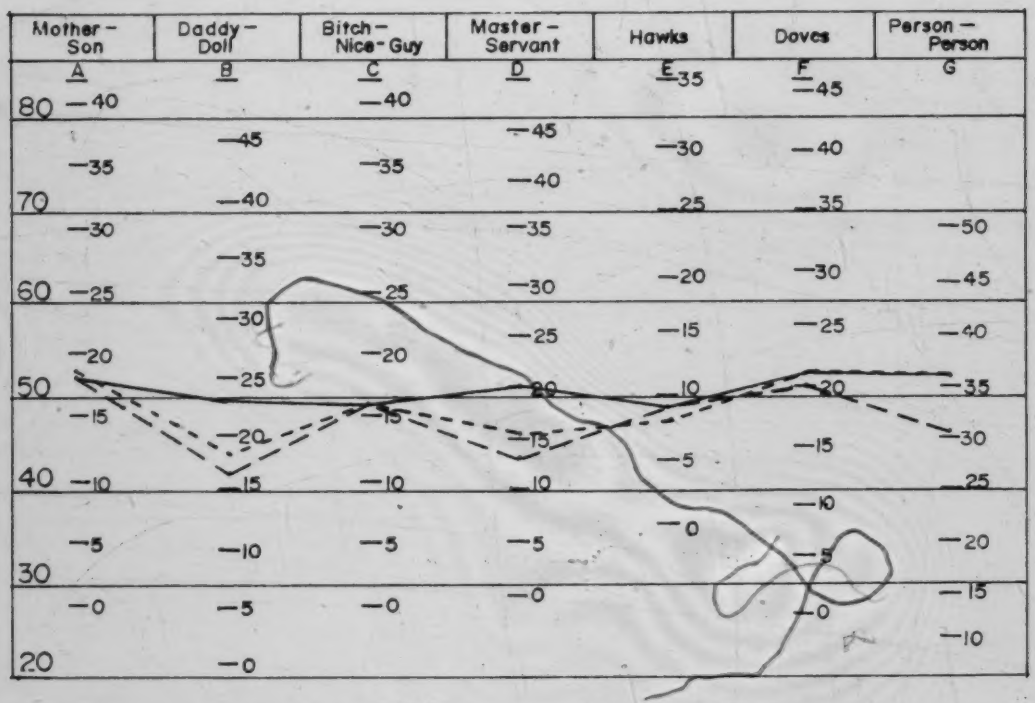

Figure 1. Comparison of PAI Profiles for MEP Participants (Pre-MEP, long dashes, Post-MEP, short dashes) with Profile of Functioning Couples.

Note: The T-scores on figures 1 through 7 are from Manual for the Pair Attraction Inventory by E.L. Shostrum, San Diego : Educational and Industrial Testing Service, 1971.

the Rhythmic scale to the non-functioning couples on the PAI completed prior to the program whereas their post-MEP mean score was almost identical to that of the functioning couples (see Shostrum, 1971, p. 10). The variances also significantly differed on the pre-MEP and post-MEP and post-MEP G scores ($p = .006$) with the pre-MEP range of scores being from 14 to 48 while the post-MEP scores ranged from 25 to 45. Further the largest increase in numbers occurred in the 50 to 60 T score range where 11 of the 18 scored on the post-MEP G scale compared to 6 on the pre-MEP scale. However, since no criteria are given by Shostrum (1971) defining non-functioning or functioning, it is impossible to assess whether the MEP couples would have been considered in either of these categories.

On two of the diagnostic scales, B and D, the MEP group scored about 7 points lower on the initial PAI and 5 points lower on the follow-up one. While Shostrum (1971) indicates that lower scores on the diagnostic scales suggest greater actualizing potential, this inference cannot be made regarding the MEP group, since the diagnostic scales have not been found to differentiate between functioning and non-functioning couples. Also the lowest scores on these scales were attained on the initial PAI when the score on the G scale was also low. What can be said is that the B and D scores increased more, though not significantly, than the other four diagnostic scales and moved closer to the functioning couples' scores in doing so.

In brief, compared to the pre-MEP scores, the post-MEP scores on the PAI were more similar to those identified by Shostrum's (1971) validity study as functioning couples with the only significant change for the MEP couples occurring on the Rhythmic scale.

Statistically significant differences were found between male and

female mean scores on scales A and B of the pre-MEP test and on scale B on the post-MEP results (see Table 5). On both the pre-MEP and post-MEP results the males scored higher than the females and the male scores were quite stable, dropping slightly on the post-MEP scores. In contrast the females increased in mean score by more than two points on scale A and by almost four points on scale B. Thus all of the post-MEP increase on scale B, the Daddy-Doll, was accounted for by the female change in mean score. While the difference between the male and female means on scale B remained significant on the post-MEP results ($p < .05$) it was considerably less significant than the pre-MEP difference ($p < .005$).

Table 5

PAI Scales on which Male and Female Mean Scores were Significantly Different

Scale	Males		Females		
	M	SD	M	SD	t
Pre-MEP					
A Mother-Son	21.78	8.11	14.11	7.03	-3.07*
B Daddy-Doll	20.67	6.22	12.56	3.86	-4.06**
Post-MEP					
B Daddy-Doll	20.33	6.41	16.33	5.19	-2.83*

*$p < .05$
**$p < .005$

When the numerical difference between pre- and post-MEP means for males are compared with those differences for females an interesting phenomenon is apparent (see Table 6). Female scores increased on every diagnostic scale while male decreased on four of the six and went up more than one point on only one scale. Further on every scale except E (Hawks) the absolute value of change from pre- to post-MEP was greater for females than it was for males. Both male and females increased their scores significantly on the Rhythmic scale. Overall, female scores tended to change more than male scores by increasing and moving closer to male mean scores.

Table 6

Direction of Differences Between Pre-MEP and Post-MEP Mean Scores on the PAI for Males and Females

Scales	Males			Females		
	Pre-MEP M	Post-MEP M	Direction of Difference	Pre-MEP M	Post-MEP M	Direction of Difference
A Mother-Son	21.78	20.56	decrease	14.11	16.78	increase
B Daddy-Doll	20.67	20.33	decrease	12.56	16.33	increase
C Bitch-Nice Guy	18.33	18.11	decrease	13.89	14.33	increase
D Master-Servant	13.56	15.00	increase	12.67	15.78	increase
E Hawks	10.33	6.89	decrease	8.22	9.44	increase
F Doves	22.11	22.44	increase	17.78	19.67	increase
G Person-Person	31.44	37.11	increase	29.67	34.33	increase

Although the couples' scores on the two smaller relationship measures, the SDQ and the LBI, also showed an increase, the change was not significant on the SDQ (see Table 7). In addition, no differences were found between the male scores and the female scores on either the pre-MEP or post-MEP results. However, the score for males only did significantly increase from 91.78 to 104.44 (t = 3.744, p = .006) on the LBI while the increase in the female scores from 98.33 to 101.78 was not significant. Thus the significant increase on the LBI was largely due to the large increase of the male mean scores. The SDQ did not show a significant increase (p = .069).

Table 7

Comparison of Pre-MEP and Post-MEP Scores on the Loving Behavior Inventory and the Self-Disclosure Questionnaire

Inventory	Pre-MEP		Post-MEP		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
LBI	95.06	17.06	103.11	14.47	3.234*
SDQ	90.28	18.49	96.06	15.68	1.940

*p = .005

As might be expected, positive correlations were found among the G scale of the PAI, the LBI and the SDQ. Table 8 indicates that the post-test correlations are considerably lower, especially for the G scale and the SDQ. However, both the LBI and SDQ correlate negatively with the six diagnostic scales of the PAI on pre- and post-tests. The G scale correlated negatively with four of these six scales and positively with two scales on both pre- and post-measures with only the Dove Scale (F) correlating positively in both instances.

Table 8

Correlations Among the PAI Scale G, the LBI and the SDQ

	LBI	SDQ
PAI Scale G	.710 (.49)	.42 (.05)
LBI		.73 (.64)

Note - numbers in brackets indicate post-MEP correlations.

The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire

There were no significant changes in the MEP participant mean scores on any of the factors of the 16PF. Factor F (desurgency--surgency) registered the greatest change, increasing in mean from 10.11 to 11.28 with a probability level of .09. The remaining factors had probability levels greater than .15 and for nine factors it was .5 or more.

Table 9 shows that there were significant differences between male and female means on factors E, I and Q_4 of the pre-MEP 16PF and on E and I factors on the post-MEP test. To some extent these differences reflect the differences found between male and female population norms for these factors. All three factors are among the four that males and females differ the most on and the direction of the differences for the MEP males and females were the same as those found in the norms. (Tabular Supplement No. 2 to the 16PF Handbook, 1972). Further, on Factor I, defined as "protected emotional sensitivity" (Cattell, Eber and Tatsuoka, 1970, p. 94) the male and the female means of both the pre- and post-MEP 16PF are within the average range when converted to STENs.

Considered separately, males changed on one of the factors and females changed on two. The mean for males on Factor Q_4 (Ergic tension) increased from 8.44 to 10.22 the difference being significant at a

probability level of .05. Since the female mean decreased slightly, the post-MEP difference between male and female means was insignificant for Q_4. Similarly, the increase in mean for females from 10.22 to 11.89 on Factor F was significant at the .02 level and contributed to the noticeable change in mean on this factor for all MEP participants considered together. Although the female mean on Factor M increased from 13.56 to 15.44 with $p = .05$, this did not affect a significant change in the mean for all participants. However, this was the factor that women scored above the men and above the STEN score average for women on both pre- and post-MEP results.

Table 9

16 PF Factors on which Male and Female Mean Scores Were Significantly Different

Factor	Males		Females		
	M	SD	M	SD	t
			Pre-MEP		
E	12.56	2.87	8.44	3.47	-2.46*
I	10.56	3.13	15.33	3.74	3.25*
Q_4	8.44	5.01	14.33	3.59	2.31*
			Post-MEP		
E	12.22	2.86	7.89	3.45	-2.631*
I	9.67	4.47	16.33	4.22	4.31**

*$p \leq .05$

**$p < .005$

Six Month Follow-up Questionnaire

Source of Returned Questionnaires

Table 10 indicates that 16 of the 34 follow-up questionnaires (see Appendix D) sent out were returned. However, because four were returned by only one member of a relationship, the returns represented 10 couples out of 17. Further, of the nine couples who completed the testing immediately following the MEP, both partners responded in four instances with a male partner and a female partner responding in another two instances. Both questionnaires were returned by two couples who did not complete the final test instruments. The two returned by women only in this latter category were incomplete.

Respective reasons given were incompletion of MEP due to illness and recent marital breakdown. Thus 14 of the 16 were complete with ten of these being returned by participants who provided all of the previously discussed data. Of these 14 respondents, nine listed the newspaper as their source of information about the MEP, while three indicated other persons, one inquired and one indicated it was required as part of a group leadership program. One person missed one session of the program due to business commitments.

The Participant's Perspective of the MEP

The questionnaire was designed to obtain the participant's viewpoint as to how effective the MEP was in attaining its goals of increasing awareness of the positive aspects of marital relationships and teaching communication skills. Consequently, the questions focused on three areas--expectations, use of skills and information acquired in the

program and assessment of various aspects of the program. The responses to questions have been grouped under headings delineating these areas in the following sections. A listing of participants' comments has been provided in Appendix E.

Table 10

Number of Follow-up Questionnaires Returned by MEP Participants

	n[a]
Returned by Couples	12 (8)
Returned by Males only	1 (1)
Returned by Females only	3 (1)
Total Returned	16 (10)

[a]Numbers in parentheses indicate questionnaires returned by participants who completed all of the previous testing.

Expectations of the program. Questions two, ten and eleven, respectively, ask the participant what motivated him/her to take the program, what each expected to get out of the program for himself, and what each wanted to achieve in the dyadic relationship. The main intent was to discern whether expectations of the program were congruent with what the MEP was designed to do.

For the most part, respondents' reasons for taking the MEP fell within the scope of the program, in that 11 of the 14 responses did not indicate any major personal or relationship problems. Seven people were interested in some aspects of improving communication and/or furthering their relationships with the remaining four indicating a variety of reasons. Three people, representing two couples, did indicate that they were experiencing relationship difficulties which they hoped the MEP

would help them handle. Subsequent to the MEP, one couple entered therapy as did the wife of the other couple.

Generally the things that people hoped to achieve for themselves and in their relationships involved the same areas as their reasons for taking the program. Ten people's goals for themselves involved communication skills and/or understanding their relationship and 13 people referred to these areas in their goals for their relationships.

While two people indicated that they completely realized their rather specific goals of discovering their respective partners' views on their relationships, most people qualified their statements with comments such as "some improvement" and "more awareness of hang-ups". However, only one person stated that his expectation was not at all realized since the information shared was neither "technical" nor "statistical" as he had anticipated. One woman who "was rather pessimistic but curious" about the program and was "pleasantly surprised" with both the group participation and the ease with which personal issues were discussed. Another found that communication with her husband temporarily improved but had reverted back almost to "square one" at the time of the questionnaire.

Comments pertaining to achievement of relationship goals were also usually qualified. Partners of one couple were very positive in their statements, the husband indicating that the relationship was ". . . much stronger than before the class" and his wife stating that she was "pleased with the results". Participants all felt they had moved towards their goals with some expressing difficulty in maintaining movement. Some people expressed an awareness that achieving a more growth-oriented relationship through effective communication requires mutual commitment. As one woman stated, ". . .it's a full time job--working at it together".

This awareness recurs throughout the questionnaire responses.

Application of information acquired during the MEP. Questions five through nine were directed at discovering whether participants used any of the skills taught in the program and whether the experience of communicating directly with their partners in the group had made any difference in how they perceived themselves, their partners or their relationships.

On question five 13 people indicated they did make use of something learned during the program in their relationships and one did not answer. Nine indicated they also made use of information gained outside of their relationships, whereas three did not and two did not answer. The written responses were diverse but related to two broad areas--communication and awareness. Many indicated they were making more use of effective communication skills by such behaviors as sharing appreciation of partner more often, paying more attention to what partner says, using massage, being able to sit down and discuss issues calmly, etc. (see Appendix E). Others indicated they experienced an increased awareness and understanding of themselves and/or others by such things as: feeling more confident in dealing with others, being able to understand and accept differences in personality of partner, etc. Only one person made a statement which she saw as being negative about herself. She thought she would like to be able to find more things she liked about others but thought she was still too "hypercritical".

Question six had two parts and asked participants whether they shared (a) what they liked about their partners and (b) positive and negative feeling with their partners, more often, less often or about the

same as before the MEP. Eight indicated that they shared what they liked about their partners more often, five about the same as before the program and one did not respond. Twelve affirmed that they shared positive and negative feelings with their partners more often than before the MEP, with two persons indicating they shared feelings about as often as before the program. Thus the majority of questionnaire respondents perceived themselves as practising the two main positive behaviors which the MEP hoped to teach.

Questions seven and eight asked participants whether they discovered anything new about themselves or their partner as a result of the MEP. Eight responded yes and six, no to question seven and 10 responded yes and four no to question eight. About themselves, most people either became aware of behaviors or attitudes which were blocking their communication, or they found that they felt more positively about themselves, others or the group than they had anticipated. With regard to their partners, people became aware of behaviors which blocked or facilitated communication and of feelings, attitudes or behaviors of their partners which they had not known about before the program.

When asked, in question nine, to explain in what way, if any, the experience of the program had made a difference in their relationship, only one person had no comment. Most respondents indicated that the MEP had had a distinctly positive effect on their relationship. Many indicated that they were able to communicate more effectively especially in being able to share feelings and emotions with their partners.

It is important to mention that not all the discoveries about either themselves or their partners were positive ones. While many did express that they became more positive and appreciative within their

relationship, others seemed to find that the skills and awareness acquired during the MEP helped them deal with issues and differences more effectively. Although the MEP was perceived as a positive and useful experience, it did not only or always increase positive behaviors or attitudes.

Assessment of the program. Question four and questions 12 through 14 asked participants to rank five components of the MEP, indicate its strengths and weaknesses, make suggestions for improvement and indicate whether or not they would recommend the program to others.

As can be seen from the ranking of parts (a) through (e) of question four (Table 11) the group leaders were evaluated as the most useful aspect of the program, followed closely by the exercises and the log book. From their comments, participants found that the group leaders set an excellent example in open effective communication. They were seen as participating as group members and their ability to share their own thoughts and feelings about themselves and their relationship made it more comfortable for others to do the same. Other assets noted were that they followed the program format and kept people on topic. Most people reported that the exercises provoked them to think more about their relationship, often making them more aware of the things they did or did not do or say to indicate caring and support toward each other. The log book served the same purpose between sessions for many people and one person found it helpful to look back on after the program. The one drawback mentioned about the log book is that some people left it to the last day to complete. Neither the Two-To-One game nor the reading were found to be particularly useful parts of the program.

Most participants who commented found the game enjoyable and saw its use as a non-threatening "ice-breaker" but it was not considered applicable in daily life. Most people simply did not do any of the reading, which was not required as part of the MEP, but one person who did some of it found it "thought-provoking".

Table 11

Ranking by Questionnaire Respondents of Parts (a) through (e) of Question Four from Most Useful (1) to Least Useful (5)

Parts	Mean of Ranks	Assigned Rank
(a) Exercises	2.07	2
(b) The Two-To-One Game	3.79	4
(c) Group Leaders	1.64	1
(d) Log Book	2.53	3
(e) Related Reading	4.55	5

In their assessment of the strengths and weakness of the MEP under number 12, most strengths pertained to the group leaders or the group process. Judging from their comments, participants found the MEP group to be a supportive, non-threatening environment in which to talk about issues and feelings usually infrequently shared with partners, let along a group of strangers. Responsibility for creating this atmosphere was largely attributed to the group leaders. Among the specific aspects of the MEP which were seen as strengths were: the sharing of positive thoughts and feelings; the sharing seat exercise; the session on sensuality and sexuality, especially the film; group discussions following the exercises.

The most frequently mentioned drawback to the MEP was that it was too short. One person thought the first and second sessions were not

"goal-oriented enough" and one mentioned homework not being done as a weakness. The remainder of the weaknesses mentioned did not relate to the program itself but were rather personal or interpersonal concerns of the participants.

As might be expected a commonly suggested improvement was to make the program longer. How much longer was not usually indicated but one person suggested adding another session on sensuality and another suggested a follow-up session be held after a few months. The motivating factors in increasing the length of the program were to acquire more information and communication skills and to have more opportunity to practice the skills in a supportive environment.

In response to question 14 all participants would recommend the MEP to other couples generally because they gained from the experience themselves. Several mentioned under this or other questions that they had discussed and/or recommended the program to other couples. The specific things mentioned which recommend the MEP were similar to those seen as strengths.

At least for the people who responded to the questionnaire the MEP was largely successful in attaining its goals of increasing awareness of and/or skills in expressing ". . .the areas we like about ourselves, our partner, and our relationship". Even those who expressed serious doubt about themselves or their relationships expressed that they gained from the program if only in the sense that it helped them understand more clearly what things they wanted to change. While others made similar comments spread throughout the questionnaires about what they gained from the program for themselves and in their relationships, one made a general comment which seemed to sum up the reactions of many of these people:

I think the two main elements that made the program were the group leaders and the open discussion. The classes really got me talking which is something I never did before. It has shown me how much I really do love my wife; how I have neglected her and her feelings in the past. The course has shown me a route to take to correct this and I'm trying (I still have a long ways to go). We both seem a lot happier now.

Differences among MEP Couples

Each of the 17 couples who began the MEP had completed at least one set of test instruments and nine of them completed both. After perusing the data available on each couple, it was decided to limit the information used for discussing differences among couples to that provided by the Pair Attraction Inventory (PAI) and the follow-up questionnaire when available. The PAI was used firstly because it is a relationship inventory which has been used to discriminate among different kinds of dyadic relationships. Secondly when couples' PAI raw scores were plotted on profile sheets, differences among couples became apparent at a glance. Neither of the two smaller relationship instruments, the SDQ and the LBI, have had sufficient use or research done to provide a comparative basis for the MEP couples. Also their scores generally follow the trend of the G-scale of the PAI so it was not considered necessary to include their scores in the discussion. While the 16PF has been used to examine marital partner similarities and differences (Cattell and Nesselroade, 1967) use of the 16PF data was beyond both the analysis and scope of the thesis.

In order to compare couples, the PAI raw scores for each couple were plotted on a profile sheet. This resulted in eight profile sheets with one profile for each partner and nine profile sheets with 2 profiles for each partner, as the scores from the final PAI were also recorded on

the appropriate profiles. For the purposes of discovering general differences which emerged, the profiles of all 17 were compared. As a result six couples were defined as having high variable profiles on the six diagnostic scales similar to that of Shostrums' (1971) "non-actualizing couple" (p. 9). All these couples have at least one T score over 60, a difference approaching or beyond 30 between highest and lowest T scores and at least one scale on which there is a difference of 20 T scale points between the male and female scores on either the pre-MEP or the post-MEP profiles.

Conversely four couples were defined as having a low profile with no T score above 60, less than 30 points between highest and lowest T score and at least five scales under a T of 50 on either pre-MEP or post-MEP profiles. Also in two out of the three cases having both sets of profiles, differences between high and low and male and female became less, with the profiles thus becoming lower and flatter, approaching that of the "actualizing couple" (Shostrum, 1971, p. 8).

Of the remaining seven couples, three almost meet the criteria of the high profile group, while one approaches the criteria of the low profile group. The other three fall into neither, but have mostly over 50 T scores without the extremes of the high profile group.

Specific characteristics of the high and low profile groups will be discussed in the following section, with a few couples from each group being discussed more fully. Finally the differences between high and low groups will be discussed.

Characteristics of High PAI Profile Couples

The most obvious feature of the high profile couples was that all four of the couples 35 years of age or older fell into this category while two of the 13 couples under 35 did so. Three of the over-35 couples completed both PAI and the fourth left the program to enter therapy. Neither of the two couples under 35 completed the second PAI and one of these couples attended only one session.

In comparing the profiles of couples A, B and C (see Figures 2 through 4) who completed both PAI, the differences among them became apparent. Although all three remained high with at least two T scores over 60, for couples B and C the highest score became higher and the difference between the male and female scores on the same scale increased. All extreme differences became less on couple A's profile. Perhaps the most distinguishing differences occurred on the G-scale. Only the male of couple A had a pre-MEP G score below a T of 50 and both partners are above on the post-MEP profile. Couple B had a pre-MEP G score hovering around a T of 30 and a post-MEP score above a T of 40. Both partners of couple C increased their respective scores slightly but the scores remained widely separated, the wife's being around 40 and the husband's well above 50. Thus G scores for couple A were never low and became more "Rhythmic", those for couple B rose but remained much lower than the peaks on the diagnostic scales and members of couple C remained widely separated on the G scale.

Couples A and B returned follow-up questionnaires which furnished additional information. Both members of Couple A responded, while the male partner only responded from Couple B. Also Couple A members commented more fully and on many more questions than did the couple B

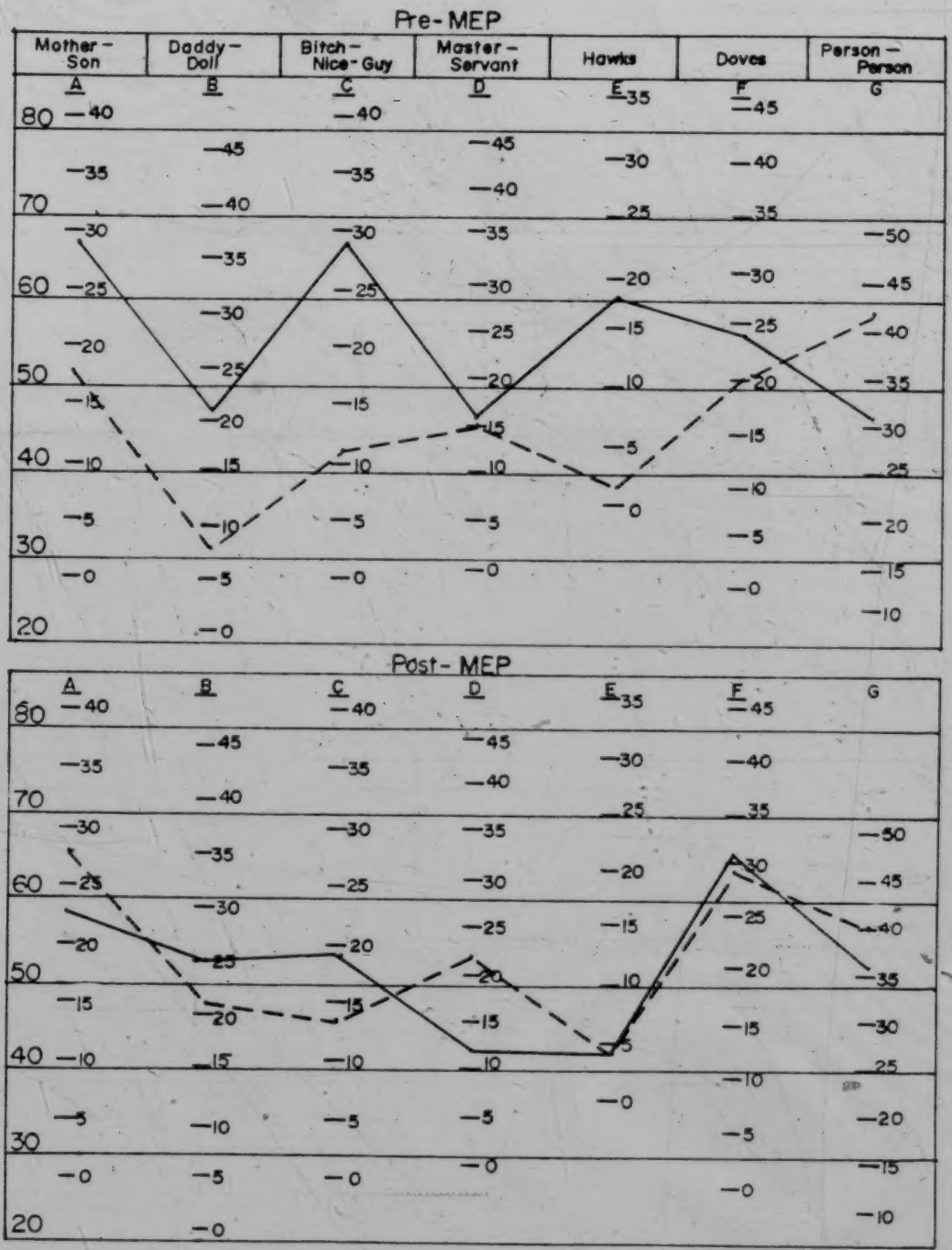

Figure 2. PAI profile for couple A before and after the MEP.

Note: On Figures 2 through 7, solid lines indicate male profiles and broken lines indicate female profiles.

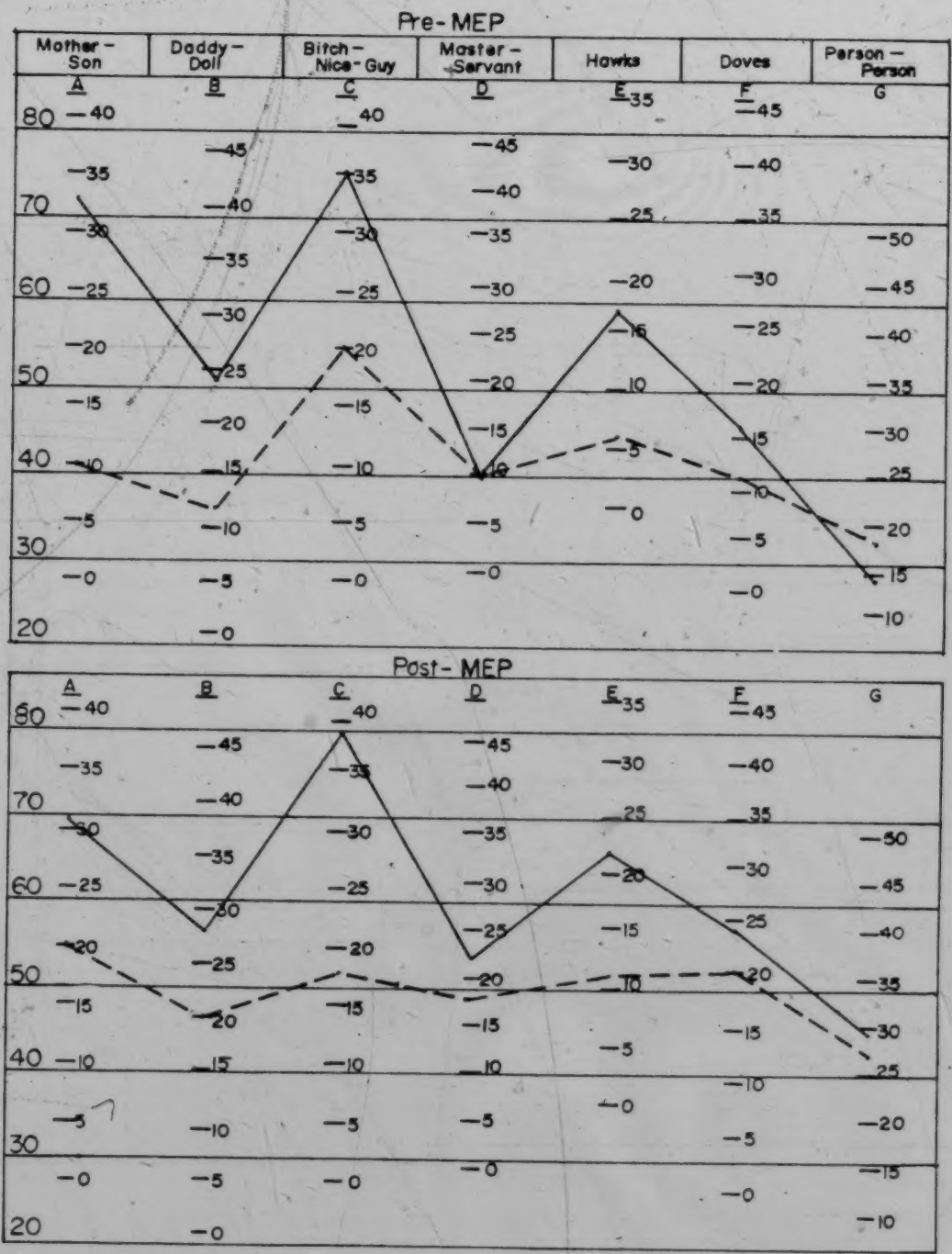

Figure 3. PAI profiles for couple B before and after the MEP.

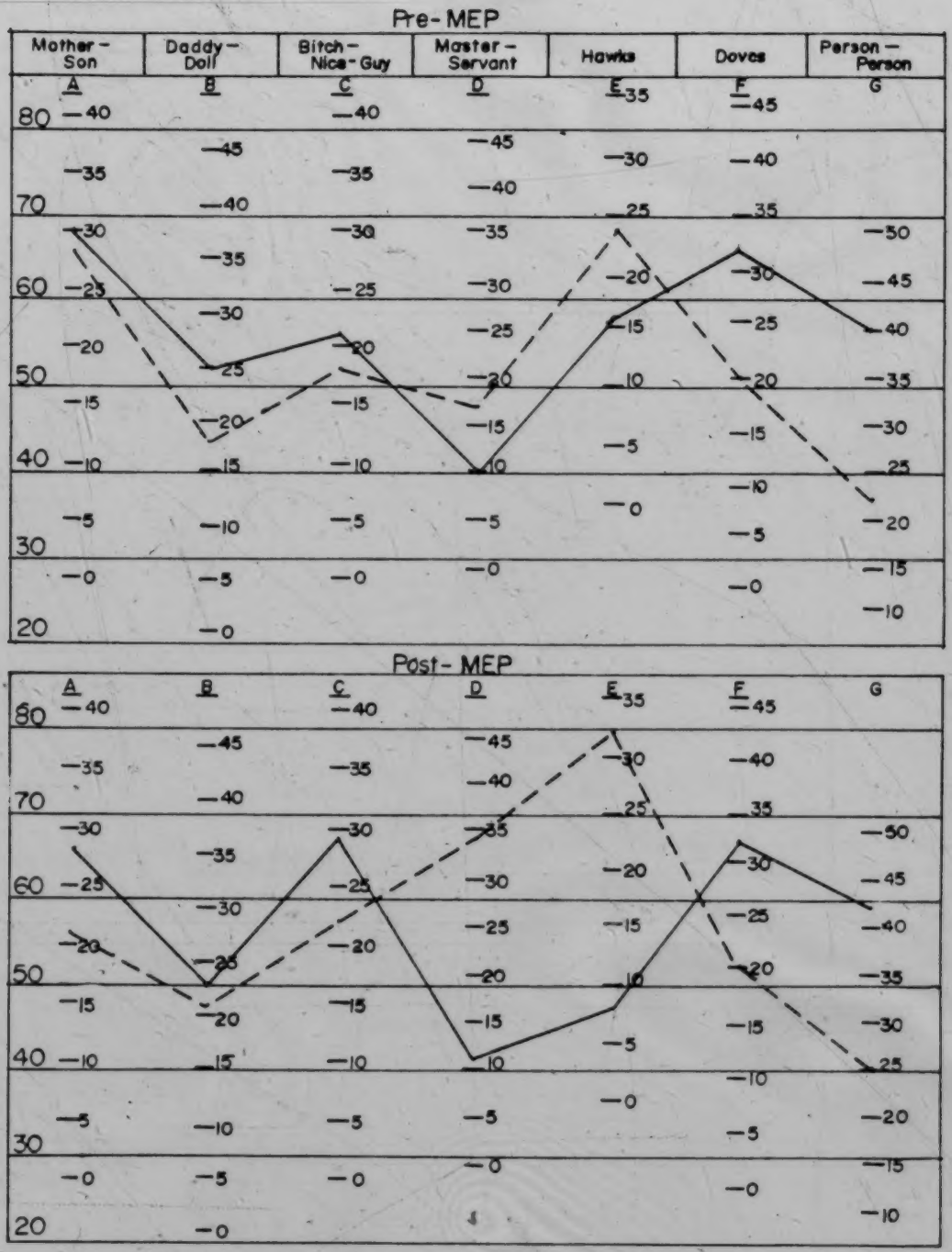

Figure 4. PAI profiles for couple C before and after the MEP.

respondent. At some point both men refer to their respective relationships in negative terms, one describing it as "strained" and the other expressing a desire to "avoid arguments and bickering". It is interesting to note that the men score much higher than the women on the Bitch-Nice Guy and Hawk scales for both these couples. Generally all three respondents indicated an awareness that there were points of difference in their relationships that they would like to change.

The major difference between couple A and couple B was best exemplified in their responses to question two which asked why each chose to participate in the MEP. While couple A responded with answers that focused on ways to improve their relationship--"there is room for improvement in all marriages", "thought it would help marriage communication"--couple B respondent simply stated "trouble with family" suggesting a need for therapy orientation rather than enrichment.

This difference is further reflected in answers to questions five, eight and nine, which referred to skills and understandings acquired during the MEP. While couple B respondent did not answer question five, couple A responded with "Try to be more direct in my approach on various matters" and "I pay more attention to what my wife is trying to say" indicating a mutual attempt to deal with the same issue. On question eight the wife from couple A discovered that her husband "was embarrassed and uncomfortable about things I thought he was confident about", while her husband discovered "that she likes to talk a lot and assume a teacher-like role". Both discoveries can potentially aid these partners in clarifying communication. Couple B respondent discovered that his wife "does not always mean what she says" indicating that he perceived a serious block in their communication. Couple A's answers to question

nine focused on improvements--she states, "I show more patience and tolerance" while he indicates that they ". . .are somewhat more compatible knowing that other people have their problems". The change in relationship perceived by couple B respondent was that "periods of strained relationship are shorter" which again focusses on the negative aspects of the relationship.

All three participants felt they partially realized their expectations from the MEP and would recommend it to others. Couple A would have liked it to be longer with the husband expressing a need for more time to acquire and practice the skills and information shared by other couples. For him particularly the MEP seems to have been a rewarding experience in which he discovered that he enjoyed "participation in a mixed group of strangers". The husband from Couple B indicated that his recollections of the program were not clear as he and his wife entered intensive therapy after the MEP. Both the PAI profiles and the questionnaire responses would indicate that this was an appropriate move but there is no indication as to whether the MEP facilitated the step or delayed it.

Characteristics of Low PAI Profile Couples

All four low profile couples were under 35 years old, ranging from 21 to 34. Three couples completed both sets of test instruments; two of these returned both follow-up questionnaires with the third returning one questionnaire. The fourth couple who completed the initial testing only, terminated their common-law relationship subsequent to the MEP, but have remained on amicable terms.

Figures 5 through 7 show the pre-MEP and post-MEP profiles of three couples who are referred to as couple D, couple E and couple F.

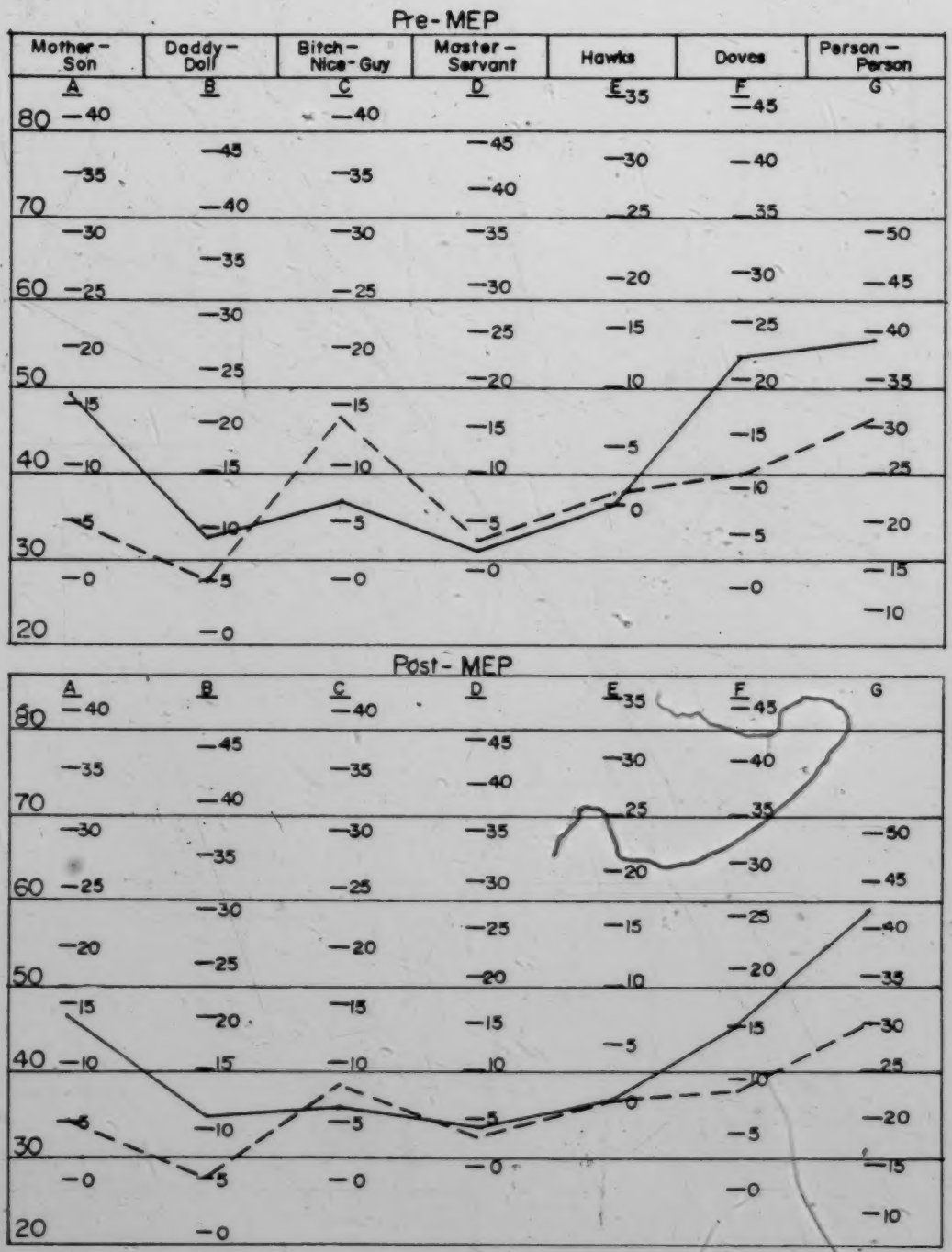

Figure 5. PAI profile for couple D before and after the MEP.

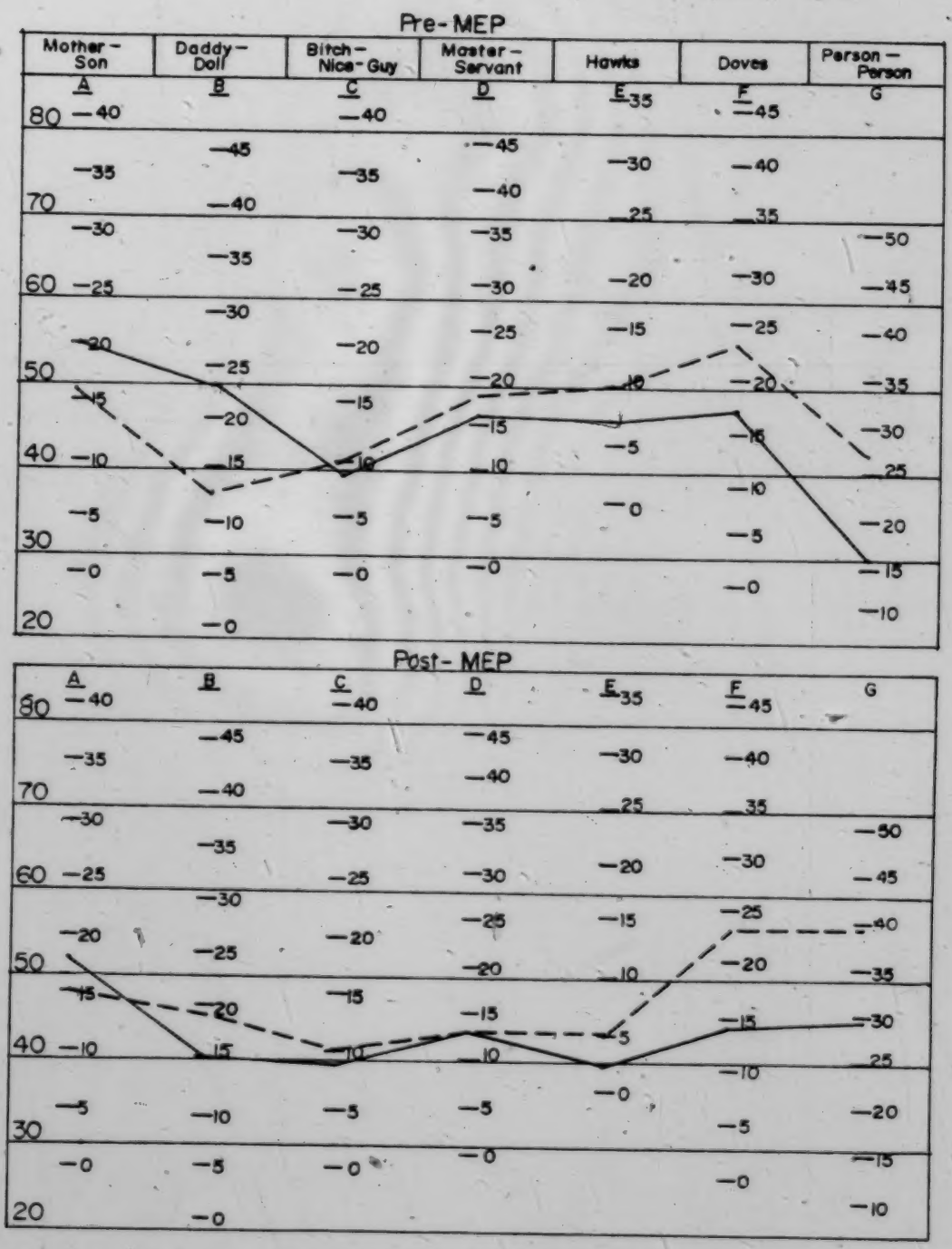

Figure 6. PAI profiles for couple E before and after the MEP.

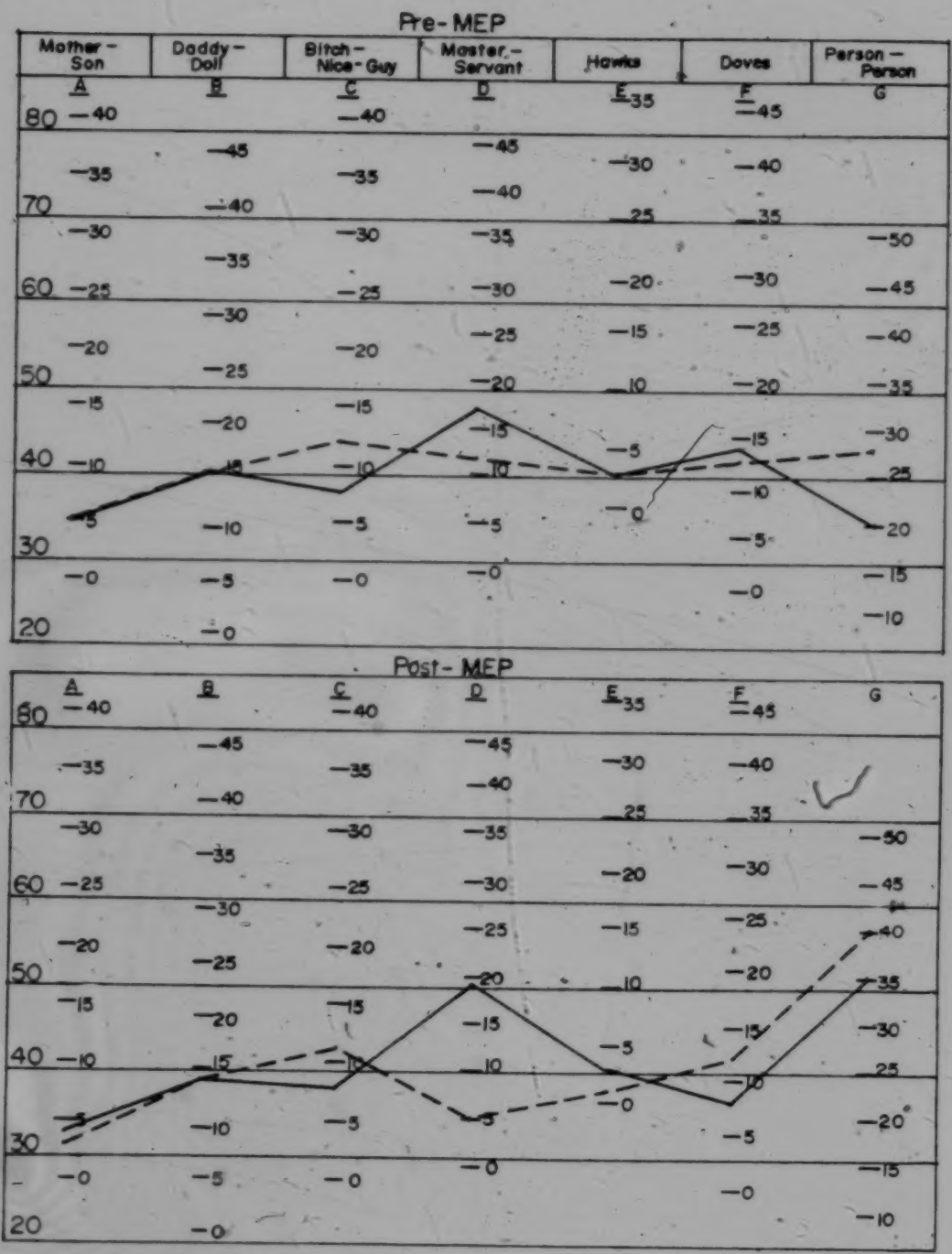

Figure 7. PAI profiles for couple F before and after the MEP.

On the six diagnostic scales the profiles for males and females were similar with few extreme differences on any of the scales. On the post-MEP profile, couple D male-female differences became noticeably less; for couple E the difference increased on the Dove scale (F) and for couple F the difference noticeably increased on scale D. As was the case with the high profile couples, there were noticeable differences among these couples on the G scale scores. Couple D scores for both male and female were higher than either of the other couples on the pre-MEP profile but changed very little on the post-MEP profile. Also the male G score in both instances was well over a T of 50 while the females' G-score remained under 50. In contrast couple E and couple F changed considerably on the f-scale. In both cases on the pre-MEP profile, the female scores were between T scores 40 and 50 and the males between T scores of 30 and 40. Couple E scores on the post-test rose to between 50 and 60 for the female and 40 and 50 for the male, while both scores of couple F rose to between 50 and 60. Couples D and E had almost identical male-female differences on the post-MEP G scale though the sex of the high and low scoring persons were opposite. Couple F had less male-female difference on the post-MEP G scores but the female scores remained higher than the male scores. It is interesting to note that the highest G-scores were not attained by low profile couples but in only one other instance are the high G-scores combined with low diagnostic scale scores. The female of this couple had a very "actualizing" profile with all six diagnostic scale scores around a T of 40 and a G score between T 50 and 60. However, her partner scored over a T of 60 on two scales with both these scores being around 20 points higher than her scores.

The low-profile couples' responses to the follow-up questionnaire

generally showed more similarities than differences. From their responses, these people were involved in relationships which were not characterized by extreme differences or stress. In fact they either state or infer that they found their relationships positive experiences which they were open to exploring further. Couple F respondent chose to participate in the MEP to "maintain a happy relationship" and the male of Couple D states that their "relationship was very well developed in areas of communication and sharing feelings. . ." and that the program aided them in exploring these areas further. In fact couple D's major goals were to become more able to acknowledge each other in a group setting and secondly to become more comfortable about sharing their positive and satisfying relationship with others. Both indicated that the MEP helped them to work towards these goals and that the Sharing Seat Exercise (Appendix A, Session 3) was especially helpful.

Couple E made no explicit statements about how each one of them viewed their relationship but did indicate that the MEP was very positive experience for each partner and their relationship. Both had the common expectation of the MEP as a way to improve their communication and were able to explicitly express what communication areas they were concerned with in their relationship. His desire for "feedback from wife as to her views of our relationship and her needs, desires, etc." and her desire ". . .to be able to communicate more openly" indicates that they were concerned with the same communication block. While he expressed that his expectation of hearing his wife's viewpoint was "completely realized", she stated that she will "have to work" at putting to use the skills she learned from the program. Both were aware that in his terms, "old habits are hard to break", and that mutual effort would be required to continue

open communication patterns. He was especially "pleasantly surprised" by his wife's reaction to the program and she felt that the non-threatening approach of the program and group leaders allowed her to be able to talk more openly than usual.

In general, the questionnaire responses of couples D and E indicated that both partners of each relationship were aware of and willing to work on the same issue. Thus they were usually more explicit in describing their goals and these goals were mutual more often than was the case for other couples who returned both questionnaires. This suggests that these couples had established the basis for effective communication, either before or during the MEP. This is exemplified in their discoveries about each other. Couple D's discovery was that they both found it difficult to show they care about each other in the presence of others. Couple E both made positive discoveries--she, that he understood and appreciated her situation and he, that she could respond openly. In contrast, most other couples who responded often found out information that would indicate these partners communicated very little to each other about things that were important to the individuals or the relationship. For instance, one husband discovered that his wife seemed "to be unable to get or feel any sense of satisfaction from her endeavors" whereas his wife discovered that he felt "much more deeply" than she ever appreciated. Another discovered his wife ". . .was interested in developing our marriage beyond the point it was at."

Comparison of High and Low Profile Couples

Two characteristics differentiated the high-profile from low-profile couples in this study--age and number of couples with relationship

difficulties. As previously indicated, four out of six high-profile couples were over the age of 35, while the low-profile couples were under 35. While this is interesting, nothing can be inferred from it since there were only four couples out of 17 aged 35 or over.

It was found that five of the 17 couples experienced relationship difficulties either by their own admission on the questionnaires or through information from the group leaders (see Table 12).

Table 12

Number of Couples with High, Medium and Low PAI Profiles who Experienced Relationship Difficulties

Profile Category[a]	n[b]	Number of Couples with Difficulties
High	9 (4)	3
Medium	3 (0)	1
Low	5 (1)	1
Total	17 (5)	5

[a]The High Category includes both High and Approaching High PAI profiles and the Low Category includes both Low and Approaching Low PAI profiles.

[b]Number in brackets indicates the number of couples in each category from which there is no information available on the existence of relationship difficulties.

The medium-category couple who experienced difficulties had a very low G score for both partners and the difference between the highest scale score and the G score was greater than 30 T score points, while the other two medium-category couples had much higher G scores and less difference between high and low scale scores. Thus four of the five couples with difficulties had PAI profiles with extreme differences

between their high T score scale and low T score scale. The low profile couple ceased living together by mutual consent. Of the other four couples, one went into therapy during the time of the MEP, a second went into therapy after as did the wife of a third couple, whereas the husband left unexpectedly in the fourth instance.

Thus out of the twelve couples on which information was available, three out of five high profile couples experienced difficulties requiring therapy, or resulting in separation, while only the most high profile of the three medium category couples did so. The only couple of the low category couples to separate apparently did so without stress. In this MEP group, it appears that there was a greater chance of stressful differences occurring for couples with high extremes than for couples with either low extremes or low profiles.

Enthusiasm for the MEP was a characteristic that was common to couples who changed the most in a positive sense. Thus couple A from the high profile couples and couple E from the low profile couples were more outspokenly positive on their questionnaires about their own changes and about the MEP than other couples in their respective groups. In comparison, low-profile couple D responses indicated they had been communicating openly and exploring their relationship quite some time before the MEP. It was the female of this couple who suggested that she saw the MEP as "preventive training in how to keep a relationship open". It would seem from the results of this particular group that the MEP was most positively perceived by those couples who were ready and open to mutually furthering their relationship but had not done a great deal of this on their own.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary of Findings

A group process of the human potential genre, the MEP was designed for couples involved in functioning marriages who wished to improve the quality of their marital relationships. Specific objectives of the program were (a) to increase awareness of what each person liked about himself, his/her spouse and their relationship; and (b) to increase skills in expressing positive feelings and thoughts. For the most part, information provided by the participants of this study has indicated that the objectives were partially attained and that the MEP was evaluated as a worthwhile experience.

Although it was anticipated that the initial interview would provide an opportunity to discover and redirect those couples whose marital situation indicated a need for therapy rather than the MEP, five of the couples became involved in therapy or separated either during or after the MEP. There is evidence that three of the couples were aware of existing relationship difficulties before they entered the MEP. Follow-up questionnaires from two couples indicated that they hoped the program would help them deal with problems that were creating stress in their relationships and a third couple chose to discontinue attending the MEP once they entered therapy. A fourth couple who were not married had considered separating and did so after the program. This was evidently seen as a

positive move by both parties. Only in the fifth instance was there no prior awareness of difficulties or differences given, since the wife indicated that her husband left abruptly and unexpectedly five months after the MEP.

Given that there could have been additional couples experiencing serious enough difficulties to merit counselling among the five on which no information was available, the question remains as to what motivated such couples to choose the MEP. Judging from the information available, it was likely that the MEP was seen as a less threatening alternative to therapy and possibly as a way to remediate stresses without therapy. Certainly all of the couples who sought individual or marital therapy did so after commencing the MEP. Whether these people had prior awareness that their marital difficulties were beyond the scope of the MEP, or whether they came to acknowledge it during the program, the experience of the MEP apparently encouraged them to seek therapy either individually or as couples.

Regardless of the benefits of the MEP to the aforementioned couples, the initial interview was apparently insufficient to indicate the existence of individual or relationship difficulties of a severity more suited to therapy than an MEP. However the PAI profiles of the couples suggest that this instrument could provide useful information on a couple-relationship before they entered the MEP. In the current study, four out of the five couples who were known to separate or seek some form of therapy had at least one diagnostic scale score over a T of 60 and two of these couples received the lowest G-scale (Rhythmic) scores on the pre-MEP testing. Had the PAI profiles been discussed during the initial interview, possibly it could have provided a stimulus for such

couples to share areas of concern in their relationships which were more appropriate to a therapy situation than a marriage enrichment program.

With regard to attainment of the objectives of the MEP, the results are equivocal. Both the post-MEP scores on the relationship instruments (PAI, LBI and SDQ) and the returned Follow-up Questionnaire results have suggested there was an increase in communicating positive feelings and thoughts. Further all Questionnaire respondents expressed an increased appreciation for or improvement in their marital relationship with only one respondent focussing on the negative aspects of his relationship. However, follow-up Questionnaire responses indicated that the important discoveries gained were not always or only regarding positive aspects of self, partner or relationship. Rather these participants valued the increased understanding and/or acceptance of self and partner resulting from these discoveries, regardless of their nature.

From a comparison of the nine couples' pre-MEP scores with their post-MEP scores on the four test instruments, the results suggest that these couples did increase in the use of the communication skills which the MEP was designed to teach. There was a significant increase in the mean score of the LBI, which was designed to measure the incidence of the skills taught and on the PAI Rhythmic scale, which represents the type of relationship dependent on open effective communication. While dyadic self-disclosure measured by the SDQ did not significantly change, the mean score did increase considerably. Further, no changes approached the degree of that of the SDQ on any of the six diagnostic scales of the PAI, or on any of the 16 PF factors. Thus the only significant changes occurred on scales which purport to measure aspects of the dyadic relationship which were congruent with the goals of the MEP.

Similarly, on the returned follow-up questionnaire, improved communication skills were frequently mentioned both as goals and as results of participation in the MEP. The majority of these respondents indicated an increase in sharing what they liked about their partners and an increase in expression of positive and negative feelings--both behaviors which the MEP aimed at increasing. Indeed, after the group leaders, the exercises--in which awareness and communication skills were introduced and practised--were evaluated as the most useful aspect of the program. The only drawback mentioned regarding the skills was that some couples found it difficult to continue developing effective use of them in their daily lives without the support offered by the program.

In summary, while the increased scores on the LBI and PAI (G-scale) could not be attributed to the effects of the MEP due to the design limitations of this study, the comments on the follow-up questionnaire did indicate that the MEP was regarded as an effective program by these participants. All these participants stated that they would recommend the program to other couples, usually because they had gained from it both personally and in their relationship. Some reported that their relationship was definitely more positive as a result of participating in the MEP and even those who were experiencing difficulties in their relationships reported improvement of their situations. In short, for some the MEP was definitely the "enriching" experience it was intended to be, while for others the insights gained were seen as constructive and useful.

Implications for Use of the Marriage Enrichment Program

Since this study was conducted, residents of Edmonton and environs have continued to participate in MEP groups. Further other "enrichment" programs have been made available, suggesting that there is a demand for the skills and information offered by such programs. While the MEP has been specifically directed at couples involved in ongoing functioning relationships, this study has suggested that it is potentially useful as both a preventive and a remedial program, as well as an introductory communication skills program.

Given that it is likely that most people have not acquired the effective communication skill necessary to expedite the equalitarian relationship which has been increasingly expected (Nye, 1974) the MEP could be beneficial to relationships of recent origin--engaged, married or cohabiting. As one MEP participant stated, ". . .I see it almost as a preventative training, in how to keep a relationship open" (Appendix E). For such couples, the program would provide an environment in which they could become aware of and appreciate each other's perspective and acquire skills to constructively deal with existing and potential differences.

The skills and information offered through the MEP also could be useful to couples who are experiencing difficulties in their relationships that are stressful to the degree of requiring therapy. With such couples, the program could be used in conjunction with therapy. In this instance, the basic communication skills taught by the MEP could facilitate re-establishing, or perhaps establishing for the first time, a dialogue between the partners. As well, the emphasis on recognition of the positive aspects of self and relationships could focus them on aspects of the

relationship of which they were unaware, or for the most part were non-existent. In either case, the knowledge gained could be used beneficially, either in the existing relationship or in subsequent ones.

The MEP has served a third and also valid function--that of an introductory program in communication skills, specifically directed at married couples, but applicable to any interpersonal relationships. The communication skills that have been introduced in the MEP can be developed further in a program such as the MCCP. In addition to employing exercises to develop the use of effective communication skills, the MCCP has included a conceptual framework to aid understanding and appropriate use of four styles of communication. One group leader who has run both MEP and MCCP groups has found that prior participation in the MEP has provided the necessary base for effective participation in the MCCP, particularly for those couples unfamiliar with the roles played by self-awareness and responsibility in effective communication. Since MCCP was designed to teach couples to become self-sufficient in developing and changing their relationships in the directions they choose, participation in a MCCP group might meet the need expressed by some participants for more experience in the skills taught by the MEP.

Limitations and Implications for Future Investigations

As previously indicated, the absence of enough couples to form a control group at the time of this study constituted a major limitation. Although a few experimental studies have been done on marriage enrichment types of groups (Bruder, 1973; Nadeau, 1971; Rappaport, 1971) there still exists a need for research using common instruments and general

populations.

In this study the previous limitation was further augmented when only nine of the seventeen couples completing the pre-MEP instruments returned the post-MEP instruments. While none of the follow-up questionnaire respondents mentioned length as a drawback (Item 15, Appendix E) the time required was likely too lengthy to be included as part of the last session. When such time is required, possibly the addition of an extra session, either before or after the sixth MEP session, could be included as part of the whole program to ensure a higher return of the test instruments. In the present study, four out of the six follow-up questionnaire respondents who did not return the post-MEP instruments indicated they had completed the instruments, but had not returned them, suggesting that there was little impetus to complete this requirement once the program, per se, was completed.

Beyond the obvious sample limitations of the present study, possible selective factors limiting the representatives to those who initially chose MEP type programs may have existed. In a survey study, Kirby and Davis (1972) found that couples who followed through on their commitment to complete the two phases of their study, "Who Volunteer for Research on Marital Counselling", waited and dated longer before marriage, had separated for marital problems more frequently, had higher incomes and rated parents as having higher socio-economic status occupations, than did non-participants. Since their criteria for "marital counselling" shared with the couples, was broad enough to include the concept of marriage enrichment, perhaps similar studies using marriage-enrichment-type programs as an option, could elucidate their relevance of MEP types of programs to all types of marriages.

A further limitation concerns the appropriateness of the instruments used in this study. Their length as a drawback has already been considered. Aside from this is the question of their reliability and validity, especially as relationship measures. While the 16 PF have been widely used and has accumulated normative data as well as reliability and validity (as far as personality measures can) it remains an individual measure, even when used with regard to marital relationships (Cattell and Nesselroade, 1967). Of the three relationship measures used, the PAI alone has had some validation at the time of this study (Shostrum, F.L., 1973). Again there is need for more studies to be done using the same instruments.

Perhaps accruing from the aforementioned limitations of limited samples and multiplicity of evaluative criteria, evidence to this area of research are two related considerations:

a) the need for clarification of the criteria constituting marital functioning; and

b) the need for more frequent use in research of alternative methods of instrumentation and design.

Underlying the difficulty of defining marital functioning has been the confusion about what defines a marriage. Is marriage a role relationship, the roles being a consequence of inherent characteristics of each sex, or is it a relationship between two individuals who are equally responsible for the form and quality of their particular marriage? Does marriage operate as a closed system--an institution invariable after time--or is it an open system, adapting to social change?

Considering the interrelationship of these two questions, two fundamentally different meanings of marital functioning have emerged.

As the more traditional role relationship marriages have most often been treated as a closed system, marital functioning has meant commitment to an institution. Alternatives to a role-relationship marriage for the most part have been considered deviant and ultimately threatening to the institution of marriage. Alternately, within an open system perspective on marriage, marital functioning has come to refer to the commitment of two people to each other.

While the role-relationship type of marriage has been amply critiqued as being non-adaptive to the demands of our changing society, as well as detrimental to personal development, it has been the insistance on treating this type of marriage as a closed system which has been basically questioned (Branch, 1973; Buckland, 1972; Laws, 1971; O'Neill and O'Neill, 1973). Although the open system perspective has acknowledged many different styles of relationships as marriage, several writers have suggested that one particular style is qualitatively superior to others--that is the type of relationship which facilitates individual personal growth as well as relationship growth (Lederer and Jackson, 1968; Mace, 1972; and Shostrum and Kavanaugh, 1971).

At present both perspectives on marriage are represented in the literature on marital relationships. Further, instrumentation has often reflected either a traditional bias or a growth relationship bias. While the growth-oriented relationship may certainly be more satisfying for many, is it necessarily the best relationship for all couples? Rather with the expectations of marriage varying widely among people, the key to a functioning relationship would seem to be the effective communication skills deemed essential to this type of relationship. Whether these skills always or necessarily lead to a growth-oriented relationship remains to

be seen (Kantor and Lehr, 1975; Mace, 1972; Watzlowick, Beavin and Jackson, 1967).

From the foregoing it would appear that researchers and theoreticians of both closed and open perspectives have largely assumed they know what marriage is or at least what the "best" marriage is. In either case the assumptions have been treated as facts and frequently remain unstated or unexamined. It is suggested that more descriptive studies using observational methods need to be done on marriage in order to discover what kinds of marriage do in fact exist (Kantor and Lehr, 1975; Lederer and Jackson, 1968; Murphy and Mendelson, 1973; and Raush, Hertel and Swain, 1974). As Kantor and Lehr (1975) found in their observational study of the family, it may be that different types of marriage tend to dissolution in different ways and under different conditions. All types may be functional within their respective parameters.

In conclusion, since partners can no longer assume that they share the same beliefs and expectations regarding marriage, learning effective ways of communicating at least can provide them with the means to make expectations explicit and to choose the direction of their response. The continued exposure to such programs as the MEP suggests that the increased awareness and understanding of each other so gained is important to many couples, regardless of the state of their relationship.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM (MEP)

APPENDIX A

These sessions may be led by a single leader. However, I have found it very effective for a couple to lead the sessions as leader participants. This not only helps to relax the participants; it provides occasionally for effective role models in entering certain of the exercises.

In talking about the role or the role function of the group leader or leaders, I want to illustrate how with his instructions he sets the structure of what it is that people do that from time to time he will have to give identical instructions or illustrate them because the structure has broken down. That is to say, the group is no longer doing what it is he originally instructed them to do and therefore he will have to give them repeated or better illustrated instructions and in doing so he is restructuring the group.

I will also have to point out that separating feelings from thoughts is a very difficult thing to do and at best you are trying to get people to be more aware of the feelings or emotional tone of their thoughts; i.e., that there are emotional components that go along with and are a part of the thought that had to do with the significant other. Therefore, many times the instructions are to report feelings and in doing so they will be reporting a combination of thoughts, emotions and sensations.

One key rule for the marriage enrichment programs is that the participants are not allowed to explain or talk about the "why's" or "becauses" of their feelings while participating in the exercises. The leader should be very firm about this. I have found it helpful to say: "You are allowed only one because statement with your feeling; after that you are probably practising expressing thoughts instead of feelings." This rule not only keeps the group practising expressing feelings; it prevents the airing of the participant's personal laundry in front of the group during a moment of enthusiasm which might cause misgivings later.

In the instructions, the double-spaced material is for you to express to the group. The single-spaced material is meant for you.

Instructions for Session 1

There are four simple ground rules for us to abide by: (1) attend each session; (2) seriously try each log book assignment; (3) genuinely attempt each exercise the group leaders present; (4) when asked, describe whatever feelings have been experienced, whether they are positive or negative.

In each session there will be two or three exercises which will involve you talking about some aspect of your marriage which you value. As you do so, others will experience feelings which they will be asked to describe. As we go along, you may become more sensitive to your feelings. The feelings will not always be positive. Sometimes, you may experience emotions of regret, disappointment, even resentment. It is just as important to describe these feelings when they are experienced as it is to describe those of love, warmth, joy, etc.

Our role as group leaders is a very limited one. Chiefly, we give you the instructions of what to do and then sit back and watch you do it. If we feel you have not understood what it is we asked you to do, we will describe it again. Sometimes we will help you by asking specific questions. We will share our feelings as any other group member. But the good you get will come from what you experience as you participate in the exercises or procedures, and from observing the experiences of other group members. Doing the log book assignment intensifies what everyone experiences in the session.

The first exercise involves practice in recognizing one another's

feelings; remembering that effective communication does not require agreement but that it does require understanding. In your log book, you will find an answer sheet, a perceptual congruent chart and instructions for group play from the game "Two-to-One".

1. See that they locate the answer sheet and chart.
2. Read the instructions aloud while the group reads them silently. Then say:

Here is your first situation:

1. Read situation card #1 and present personal viewpoints poster #1)pleasant but cool, irritated, submissive, happy).
2. When they have recorded their answers, say something like:

Okay, compare your answers with those of your spouse and fill in the appropriate number of spaces on the perceptual congruent chart. You may briefly discuss your answers together. If you did not match at all, let me know and I will give you a consequence card. Here is your second situation:

1. Read situation card #2 and present personal viewpoints poster #2 beside himself/herself (helpless, easy to get along with, calm).
2. Continue as described above through all five situations.
3. Following completion of the last situation, divide the group into couples not married to one another and give them the following instructions:

Now I want you to separate enough from the group that you may talk privately. While together I want you to take turns telling what attracted you to your mate. You will have about 10 minutes for this part of the exercise (five minutes apiece, but you do not have to talk your five minutes all at tone time; if your partner says something which helps you remember something, you may add it).

1. At the end of 10 minutes have the group reform, wives on the left of husbands.

2. Then say:

Let's go around the group and have the husbands share something with their wives from the things they just shared with someone else's wife. Who will begin?

1. Encourage the group to assume the responsibility for participation.

2. Encourage people to speak when they want to. That is, avoid falling into the pattern of going around the circle.

3. When each husband has shared, say:

All right, wives, what are your feelings while listening to your husband and other husbands?

1. Give each wife an opportunity to express her feelings and stress the reporting of feelings whether positive or negative, but do not allow why's or becauses beyond the limit of one.

2. Repeat the experience with the wives' sharing and the husbands' reporting feelings.

3. Ask for general discussion.

The exercise we will do involves thinking about your own marriage relationship and what about it really pleases you; that you are really satisfied with.

I would like the husbands in the group to be first and to tell what it is they really like about their marriage.

1. In order to encourage spontaneity and not set up a style of responding which a group quickly adopts as a pattern, use no particular order such as going in sequence in a given direction around the circle. Let husbands spontaneously answer, though encourage the hesitant, if necessary.

2. Also encourage them to make additional comments if what others have said caused them to think of some other aspect of their marriage that they are very pleased about.

3. Initially, present this topic as in the above instructions without any illustrations. Let the husbands, themselves, come up with answers which provide illustrations. If they do not do so, then restructure by giving an illustration, or by doing it yourself.

4. The rationale is for the group, from the very beginning, to assume responsibility for responding to the questions and topics given for discussion and to experience each other's responses as a source of stimulus and illustration.

What did you feel listening to what your husband said and to what other husbands said?

1. Let the order of response be spontaneous, although there may be some need to encourage the hesitant after the first few have reported their feelings.

2. It is also very important to keep the wives talking only about feelings. Frequently, they will move quickly from describing a feeling to discussing why they felt that way. If they become preoccupied with the "because" and/or begin intellectualizing, restructure: "Just try to describe what you were feeling while listening to what the husbands said".

3. If some negative feelings or regrets are not reported, encourage wives to report these if they felt them. It is important from the very beginning to communicate to the participants that when they are asked to describe what they are feeling, they should report negative as well as positive feelings.

4. Now, reverse the roles, with wives being instructed:

Now I would like the wives in the group to describe what it is about your marriage relationship that really pleases you, that you are really satisfied about.

1. Let wives respond spontaneously.

2. When the wives have all had an opportunity to react to each other with additional responses, then instruct the husbands:

Husbands, what did you feel listening to your wife and to the responses of other wives?

1. The above question and topic for discussion is used as an ice breaker. It is a question that is usually easy to respond to for most husbands and wives. The question calls for a positive response, something that is readily and consciously available and usually causes some feeling response to the listening spouse. It also provides the opportunity for feelings to be reported so that the whole process is one which begins to set the pattern for the behaving and responding that they will be asked to do for the rest of the six sessions.

Instructions for Session 2

Warm-up exercise

I want to start by sharing with the group the feelings you had while discussing your goals. You may have experienced closeness, warmth or joy. Or you may have been surprised, disappointed or even irritated. You may have had mixed feelings. As best you can, share with us what feelings you experienced. Anyone may start.

1. Let group members respond simultaneously initially; then encourage the hesitant directly by name.
2. Restructure if individuals go on very long talking of reasons for feeling rather than describing feelings.
3. Do not permit a group discussion of reasons to get started.
4. Keep the group focused on describing their feelings.
5. If necessary, push them to recall what they felt by asking if anyone else felt . . . (make reference to what others have already said and/or to some of the feelings identified above).
6. Let this procedure go for about 10 to 15 minutes. You want them to develop the expectancy of describing their feelings to the group. Therefore, this exercise is both a warm-up for the second session as well as a warm-up to exercises in subsequent sessions.

Marital dyadic sharing exercise

For this next exercise I want husbands and wives to go as couples into separate corners and parts of the room and do some sharing with each other privately.

Your log book assignment was to make a list of the things you do in which you are saying to your partner: "I love you, value you, appreciate

you, understand you, respect you". When you are alone I want you to share with each other what you have written down.

Decide between you who is going to share first. Then, tell your partner what it is you do that says, "I love you, respect you, etc.". Then ask for feedback: "Do you experience being loved when I do this?" "Do you experience being valued, understood?" Use your log book if you like, but use it just to remind you of the things you may have forgotten to mention - don't just read it.

When the first one is all finished, then the other one take your turn sharing and getting feedback. As you go along, you may experience remembering other things that you want to point out. Do so. But for the most part, try to maintain the structure of sharing which I have just described to you. One person tells the other: "These are the things I do which communicate that I love you, etc.". And the other person gives him feedback regarding each behavior: "Yes or no, I feel loved, etc., when you do that". When the one person is all finished, then the other starts with: "These are the things which I do which say I love you, etc.".

Are there any questions? I will give you 15 to 20 minutes to yourselves to do this, then we will regroup again. As couples, try to get as far away from other couples as you can. However, once you start sharing, you will probably become unaware of the other couples.

1. Allow up to 20 minutes for this exercise. Most couples can use this much time. However, if they all seem to be finished early, regroup them. When several couples appear to be finished, you may want to ask how many need a few more minutes.

2. Not every couple needs to have all the time they want to take and once a couple is finished, you do not want to wait very long before regrouping for the next exercise. The next exercise

depends in part upon the couples bringing to it some awareness of the feelings they have experienced while sharing together.

Concentric circles exercise

Let's regroup now and this time I want the wives to make an inner circle and the husbands to sit in an outer circle where you are able to see your wife as she talks.

1. Have wives form as tight a circle as possible so the outer circle is not so scattered.

2. The effectiveness of this exercise is maximized if all in the outer circle can hear what is being said in the inner circle and if the husbands can see the facial expressions of their wives.

Now I want you wives to describe the various feelings you experienced while listening and sharing with your husbands just now. I want to emphasize that you describe what you felt, rather than discuss what was said. I want the husbands to try to be aware of what you are feeling as you listen to the wives talk.

1. Restructure the wives' participation as is necessary to keep them talking about what they felt during the dyadic sharing exercise.

2. When there are no more feelings to talk about, groups tend to slip into talking about reasons or some other intellectual exercise. Ask if there are other feelings they wish to describe. If not, move to next step.

3. When the wives are finished, give the husbands the following instructions:

Now husbands, describe what you are feeling right now listening to your wives.

1. Have them do this without moving. The wives will be able to see their own husbands. Make sure each husband responds.

2. Keep them talking about their immediate feelings, NOT those they experienced while they were alone with their wives. You may have to clarify this again.

Now, wives, do you have any feeling reactions you want to share?

1. Do not let husbands and wives get into individual conversations.

2. This part should not take too long, but does permit feedback to husbands and permits each a chance to report on any immediate feeling reactions.

Now husbands, take the inner circle and wives the outer circle; wives sit where you will be able to see your husband as he talks.

Now, I want the husbands to describe to each other the various feelings you experienced with your wives when you were alone together. Again, I want to emphasize that you describe what was felt, rather than discussing what was said.

I want the wives to try to be aware of what you are feeling as you listen to the husbands talk.

1. Restructure the husbands' participation as is necessary to keep them talking about what they felt during the former dyadic sharing.

2. When the husbands are finished, give the wives the following instructions:

Now, wives, describe what you are feeling just now, listening to your husbands.

1. Have them do this without moving. The husbands will be able to see their own wives.

2. Keep them talking about their immediate feelings, those they experienced just now, while listening to their husbands.

Now, husbands, do you have any feeling reactions just now that you want to share?

1. Do not let husbands and wives get into individual conversations.

2. This part should not take very long, but does permit feedback to wives and permits both husbands and wives to report on immediate feeling reactions.

3. The major purpose in this entire series of concentric circle sharing is to provide opportunity to experience feelings and report them; some of them after intervening experiences and some of them immediately.

4. There are also many significant and positive disclosures that have communicative value for given couples.

Termination of sharing exercise

1. Regroup into a single circle.

As a final activity I would like to go around the circle and have each of you share how you are feeling about what you did tonight as it relates to what happened when you were alone and/or when you were in the concentric circle. You may want to relate some of the things you shared when you were alone that were very meaningful to you. There may have been something you especially liked or disliked about what we did tonight. And you may have feelings related to others you want to share.

1. This gives participants an opportunity to relate some of the content of their dyadic sharing as well as any insights or experiences related to the concentric circles.

2. It is of value to go around the circle so that every person feels some responsibility for sharing his experience.

Assignments

The first assignment to be completed during the week is: "List all the things your partner does that make you feel you are loved, valued, respected, understood, appreciated by him or her". Be specific. What is their day-to-day behavior that communicates to you that your partner loves, values you, etc.?

Play "Two-to-One" at least once between sessions.

Instructions for Session 3

1. Ask how things went, feelings during homework, etc. (ad lib.).

Husband group and wife group discussion

For your log book assignment, you listed the things your partner does from day to day which communicate to you that he or she loves you, values you, appreciates you, respects you, understands you.

For the next exercise I want you to divide into two groups, all husbands in one group and all wives in the other group. In your separate groups I want you to discuss among yourselves what your partners do which make you feel loved, understood, appreciated. That is, I want you husbands to share with each other what your wives do which makes you feel they love and respect you.

Now, separate into groups and I will come to each group and give you more specific instructions.

1. Go to the husband group and instruct each to describe what it is his wife does which makes him feel she loves, values, respects, understands him.
2. Emphasize they are to describe specific behavior and make personal reference to their own wife and not about wives in general.
3. Go to wife group and give similar instructions and emphasis.
4. Listen in on both groups, making sure they are following your instructions appropriately; restructure as necessary.
5. After each person in the small group has had a turn, encourage additional responses. What others have said may have reminded them of additional specific behaviors.
6. Allow up to 15 minutes to insure everyone having an ample opportunity to become personally involved in talking about their partners.

7. If you have a co-leader, each of you may stay with one of the groups and give the instructions provided above.

Sharing seat exercise - loving behavior

1. Regroup into one tight circle. If you are sitting in chairs, have two extra chairs as part of the circle. Face them toward each other. If you are sitting on the floor, leave enough space at one point in the circle for two people.

2. You should plan to sit close to the sharing seat space so as to hear every word and give instructions.

The next thing we are going to do is the "sharing seat" exercise. A couple sits facing each other in that part of the circle which has been left open.

While sitting there you will share with each other what you said just now when you were in your separate groups. That is, you will tell each other what it is the other does that communicates love, understanding, respect.

Although I want you to talk loudly enough for all of us to hear, you are to talk to each other as though you are alone. Do not talk to us about your partner. Talk to your partner about what it is he does which makes you feel loved, valued, etc.

Which couple will be first? (Permit the couples to come in the order they choose.)

1. When a couple gets up to sit in the sharing seat, make sure they are sitting face to face, close together, though not necessarily touching each other. Also, where they are sitting is to be a part of the circle. Do not put them in the middle of the circle. As the first couple moves to the sharing seat space, have the rest of the group close up the circle. When the next couple comes, the first couple can take the empty space left in the circle. Each time this change occurs, make sure a tight circle is maintained.

Now, I want you to do this in a specific way. Who will talk first? (Now address your instructions specifically to each person. For sake

of illustration, I am assuming that the husband has said he will talk first.)

Sally, while Jim is sharing with you, I want you to be quiet and not verbally respond until I tell you to do so. When he is finished, I will ask you to describe what you are feeling, listening to what he says. Then you will have your turn to share with him.

Now, Jim, I want you to tell Sally what it is she does which makes you feel she loves you, values you, respects you, understands you. You may repeat what you have already written and said as well as any additional things which come to mind.

Be specific and detailed in telling her. Also try to point out not only the big important things, but the very small, day-to-day things which she does that communicate these feelings to you.

1. Immediately restructure for the person sharing if he fails to speak in the first person to his partner (I - you, you - me) or if he fails to bring the past into the present (when you do such and such, I feel you love me).

2. Do not let a conversation get started between them. One is to listen while the other talks.

3. If the one speaking has very little to say, encourage and support him; e.g., "Are there other things she does, little day-to-day things?" "Are there any specific things she does which make you feel she understands you, respects you?"

4. When the first person is finished, instruct the listener as follows:

Sally, what are your feelings, listening to Jim? Will you describe them to him?

1. Start with the above instructions, but if necessary encourage her to tell him what she is feeling right then; i.e., "I am feeling, etc." and also what she felt in response to specific statements; i.e., "When you said, etc., I felt, etc.".

2. When she is finished describing her feelings, give her explicit instructions regarding sharing with him:

Now, Sally, I want you to tell Jim what it is he does which makes you feel he loves you, values you, respects you. Be specific and detailed in telling him.

1. When she is finished:

Jim, what are your feelings listening to Sally? Will you describe them to her?

1. When he has finished describing to her his feelings and before they leave the sharing seat, give the following instructions to the group:

Now, let's go around the group and describe any feelings you experienced as you listened to Jim and Sally. You may have felt something about them or about yourself, or about your own relationship; whatever feelings you experienced, please describe them to the group.

Let's begin with the person to the left of the couple and go in order from person to person back around to the couple until each of us has had a chance to describe the feelings we experienced while listening to them.

1. Be more strict in keeping individual group members describing feelings. Restructure quickly as necessary. They will feel a need to follow the description of a feeling with a because statement. Permit the because statement as it is directly related to the feeling, but do not let them go beyond the simple statement of "because" into some dissertation regarding that particular feeling.

2. The group leaders also report their feelings.

3. When everyone in the group has finished, then ask the couple:

What are you feeling now?

1. Then ask them to take the space in the circle left by the next couple who sit in the sharing seat.

2. Give the same set of instructions.

3. If at all possible, every couple should participate during this session, even if it means running overtime. The group situation develops in this session such that this becomes the best moment for any couple to share the content they had prepared for this session.

4. Continue to have the group share their feelings after each couple does the sharing seat exercise.

5. At some point you will have to revitalize the words most frequently used during the sharing seat and by the observers. Individuals will begin to be apologetic for the frequent use of the words love, happy, joy, close, etc. Remind them that the frequent use of the words does not reduce the intensity of the feelings they are trying to describe by the use of the words. Emphasize they should not permit the reality of their own experienced feelings to become unreal simply because there are not different words to use to describe the experience.

6. When the last couple has reported their feelings in response to the feedback of the group, give the assignment for the next week.

Assignments

1. Do homework assignment for session 3.

2. Also, some time during the next week, complete another of the loving behavior inventories.

Instructions for Session 4

How did things go this week? Couples frequently report some difficulty in doing the sharing seat alone without group support. I wonder if any of you may have experienced this?

1. Allow approximately 5 minutes if there is discussion.
2. Divide into two groups. Men and women should be in each of these groups. However, spouses should not be in the same group.
3. One of you should go with one group and one with the other.

This is your time to discuss points about the homework. We can talk about specific ideas and we can talk about our reactions in relation to some of the ideas. This is sharing time and you may discover ideas or feelings which you will want to discuss further at home with your partner. We have about 20 minutes.

1. It is all right for members to talk "topic" and remain "safe".
2. The purpose is for the participants to "try out" talking about sexuality. Some will be more comfortable than others and a climate of "however you are is okay" should be encouraged. No one should be forced to contribute.
3. The manner in which you share will be a very important factor. If you should be a little "up-tight" say so.
4. Reform the total group.

Does anyone have any feelings which they want to share at this point?

1. Let the group have an opportunity to respond. Should negative feelings become evident at some point, you may wish to say:

Someone once said that it isn't so much what happens to us as it is how we interpret what happened. How can we interpret this or work on it so that it does not remain a negative but turns into a positive? Think

about that and be encouraged to work on it at home.

I know all of you will be anxious to get home and discuss these things. Perhaps you might want to use the sharing seat format.

1. Show the film "Sexuality and Communication".

2. You may wish to comment that as good as the film is, it cannot speak to individuals in all areas. Sex is a very unique aspect of a person and that they may find areas that "fit" them as well as areas that do not "fit".

3. Following the film, talk as time allows. Give out homework for the next session. Request that participants dress informally for the fifth session and that they do not have their hair done.

Instructions for Session 5

How did the week go? Sometimes couples report a difficulty in trying to maintain a positive outlook. I wonder if any of you may have experienced a desire to be negative?

1. Allow approximately 5 minutes if there is discussion.

As partners I want you to go to separate areas in the room to discuss this week's homework. Questions 1 and 2 in the assignment should be looked at not as an either/or situation. You could have both.

You should go through the remaining questions in the following manner. Decide which of you will speak first. The listener then repeats to the speaker what he heard the speaker say. The speaker acknowledges when he believes he has been understood. The listener then becomes the second speaker and shares his answer to that question. His partner now listens and repeats back in the same manner as the first listener. Go through all of the homework in this manner. Are there any questions?

1. Allow 15 or 20 minutes for this exercise.
2. Reform the group.

I want each couple to take turns describing their feelings which they experienced while discussing their homework.

1. This may be the best time to have a coffee break.
2. You should now give input about sexuality and sensuality along the following lines:

The specific sexual part to the program is now behind us. What we would like to talk about now is sensuality, a much broader area than

sexuality. In fact, sexuality is only one part of sensuality. More appreciation of our sensuality can increase our sexual pleasure and can also be appreciated for purely sensual benefits. More sensual awareness brings about a total body experience, not just a localized genital feeling.

Sometimes we deny ourselves and others sensual contact because in our culture almost any touch heats up sexually pretty fast. This is not so in all cultures.

1. The group may discuss touching customs in other cultures, etc.

Can we share some of our sensual favorites? One of mine is sliding into bed between fresh, clean sheets.

1. Take a few minutes here to let the group explore their individual awarenesses of sensuality.

Massage is a special, shared sensual experience. Tonight we are going to practise a face and head massage. Before getting into it, though, I would like to share some thoughs concerning massage in general.

1. Pick from pages 1, 21-24, 27-28, 39-44, 48.
2. Also look at pages 133-138.
3. For the marriage enrichment massage, we do it in a sitting position.

I will give instructions while massaging (partner's name). The spouse who is to be massaged first should sit on the floor and lean back between his/her partner's legs. Or the spouse who is to be massaged may sit in the chair and his/her partner should stand behind him/her. Are we ready?

1. Instructions and illustrations for the massage are found on pages 39-44 and page 48. After finishing the massage, wait for a brief time and ask:

How are you feeling?

Now, let's change places and repeat the massage.

1. The leader doing the massaging should repeat the directions again as he/she demonstrates (pp. 39-44, 48). After finishing the massage, wait a brief time and ask:

How are you feeling?

1. Some general discussion may just naturally happen. Don't worry about forcing it because some groups are just too relaxed to get going again.

Assignments

Look at your log books on page 8 which starts out "As a result of these meetings, have you become aware of problems or potential problems?" Some time during the next week, try to think about this and write a few sentences.

Instructions for Session 6

Marital dyadic mirroring exercise

This session begins with an exercise involving separating couples. Stand facing each other with enough room between couples that with arms fully extended from your sides, no one is touching anyone else. Everyone get into such a position. Then I will give you additional instructions.

1. Each couple should be standing facing each other and able to wave their arms fully to their sides and not touch anyone else.

Now, put your hands up in front of you at about shoulder level with palms out from you about 12 inches and facing toward the palms of your partner. Adjust your distance from each other so that you are comfortable holding your holds in front of you with about 6 inches between your palms and those of your partner.

The object is to maintain your hands in exact counterposition to your partner while moving them in various patterns so that the sensation is that of standing in front of a mirror; whenever you move your hands, there is always a pair opposite yours.

Now, keeping your eyes focused on a point between the eyes of your partner and without any talking, move your hands very slowly in a plane between you and your partner, so that you can always keep your palms opposite each other, approximately 6 inches apart.

Move them very slowly, following any pattern you desire, but you must try to keep your hands always opposite those of your partner at all times as though you were standing in front of a mirror. Do not take

our eyes off the spot between the eyes of your partner.

1. Move about, giving directions to individual couples as necessary.

2. Remind them not to talk, to keep eyes focused on a point between eyes of partner, to move hands very slowly, keeping them 6 inches apart and always keeping them opposite those of their partner.

3. Let this continue for 3 to 4 minutes, permitting enough time for couples to begin to get the idea and to also encounter the fact of two separate wills. Notice there is not anything in your instructions which suggests which person should be a follower.

All right, drop your arms and let them rest a few minutes before we do it again. Now, what did you feel while trying to do this?

All right, I want you to try it again and this time work toward a sense of oneness, being neither the leader nor the follower. Concentrate on being one with the other such that your hands are moving together simultaneously, but no talking.

1. Give them another 3 or 4 minutes.

2. Some couples will tend to still be jerky but most couples will begin to experience a sense of working together in oneness.

Now, drop your hands to rest again. What did you experience this time?

Now, try just one more time and see if you can increase your feelings of togetherness and oneness.

1. Stop them after 5 minutes and regroup in a circle:

All right, drop your arms and let's regroup in a tight circle.

That can be a fun exercise to try together and to share the feelings you experience.

Marital dyadic communication - verbal and nonverbal

Now, I am going to give you some instructions for a sequence of four things I want you to do. You will be alone with your partner and once we start you will go from one activity to the next at my signal. We will not regroup again until you have completed all of them.

1. You will give them all the instructions the first time while everyone is still in one circle.

When we separate I want you to sit very close to each other, closer than is possible if you sit directly opposite each other. Therefore, you will need to be more alongside each other but still facing each other. Get into a comfortable sitting position if you can, for you will be there approximately 20 minutes.

The first thing I want you to do is to share with each other what you feel has happened to you, to your partner and to your relationship as a function of attending these meetings. You wrote something about this in your log books. Now you will have 8 to 10 minutes to verbally share your feelings about what has happened, especially the things you like.

Then I will tell you to stop and start the next exercise. From this point on you are not to talk to each other. Everything else is to be done in silence.

The second activity is to think about the things you experienced in the previous sessions that you really liked. Try to recall and relive specific times in which something was said and felt which was a high point for you, very rewarding experience. Try to recall what was said, who said it and what your feelings were at the time. You will have approximately 5 minutes to do this. You should close your eyes during this time.

I will tell you when to stop and start the third exercise. Continuing to keep your eyes closed, at my signal begin to focus upon a feeling you would like very much to express to your partner, a feeling about them, something you would very much like them to know. The more you concentrate on this, the more intensely you will probably feel it and want to communicate it.

At the end of 2 minutes I will ask you to open your eyes and express the feeling to your partner but without using any words. You are to communicate what you want them to know nonverbally. Whatever behavior seems most expressive of your feelings, go ahead and use it. But no talking. Each partner will have 1 minute in which to communicate his feeling.

Please try to follow my instructions very closely. Before each new exercise I will briefly tell you what to do next.

Are there any questions?

I want you to be very much aware of what you have been feeling, listening to these instructions. At the end of the session we may discuss how you are feeling right now. Everyone find a corner.

1. Make sure husbands and wives are sitting very close to each other.

Now, spend the next 8 to 10 minutes sharing with each other what you feel has happened to you, your partner, your relationship as a result of participating in these sessions. Share with each other how you feel about it.

1. At the end of 8 minutes if it appears that all the couples have done all the serious sharing, start them on the next exercise. But do make them use at least 8 minutes. Ten minutes is the maximum.

Please finish up what you are sharing now and stop (wait 15 to 20 seconds).

Now, from this point until we regroup, please do not talk to each other. Close your eyes and for the next 4 minutes recall the good experiences you had in the previous sessions; try to relive them. Remember what was said, what was felt. Until I ask you to stop, please continue to relive specific experiences that were very meaningful to you.

1. At the end of 4 minutes, give the following instructions:

Continuing to keep your eyes closed, for the next 2 minutes please explore your feelings about your partner or for your partner that you would like very much to have him or her know. Then focus on just one particular feeling that you most want to share, want to express right now. Two minutes is a very long time to hold on to one feeling, so try to experience this feeling as intensely as you possibly can. Let is grow within you.

1. At the end of a full 2 minutes, give the following instructions:

Now, open your eyes and without saying a word, I want the wives first to communicate your feelings to your husband in whatever nonverbal way best expresses what you want him to know. Let the feeling decide what you do. You have 1 minute to do this. Husband, be aware of all the feelings you are experiencing.

1. At the end of 1 minute:

Now, husbands, it is your turn; without saying a word, I want you to communicate your feelings to your wife in whatever nonverbal way best expresses what you want her to know. Let the feeling decide what you do.

You have 1 minute to do this. Wife, be aware of all the feelings you experience.

1. At the end of 1 minute, have them regroup into one circle.
2. Do not encourage talking at this point.

Marital dyadic feedback

1. Essentially, you are going to interview each couple regarding what they experienced. Pick your couples in some random fashion, rather than going around the circle in sequence.
2. There are four aspects of the experience you want them to describe:
   a) Describe what the feeling was they tried to communicate nonverbally.
   b) Report whether they understood specifically what the feeling was.
   c) Describe what was done nonverbally.
   d) Describe what feelings were being experienced while being communicated to in this nonverbal way.
3. You will try to get answers from each partner to all four of your questions in the sequence given. However, as you go along, couples will begin to give the information more spontaneously so that you may not always need to ask the specific questions.
4. When you have selected your first couple:

Now, sit facing each other. Sally, tell Jim what you were trying to communicate to him.

1. Make sure she speaks directly to him.

Jim, tell Sally what you thought she was trying to communicate to you.

1. If there is a discrepancy, a short interaction may follow in which the partners try to account to each other for the discrepancy, but do not permit a long dialogue.

Now, Jim, you tell Sally what you were trying to communicate to her.

Sally, tell Jim what you thought he was trying to communicate to you.

All right, now Sally, what did you do nonverbally to communicate your feeling?

Jim, describe to Sally any feelings you experienced as she did that.

Jim, what did you do nonverbally to communicate your feelings?

Sally, describe to Jim any feelings you experienced as he did that.

1. Pick another couple, asking them to sit facing each other and ask each of them the same four questions in the sequence given.

2. Have each couple participate in this manner.

Group feedback

Now, let's share whatever feelings we experienced listening to each couple describing their experience.

1. Let this be totally spontaneous. Stop it when everyone has responded who wants to respond. Do not encourage responses from any who fail to do so.

What kinds of reactions do you have to this session? What did you like and dislike?

1. Let this be spontaneous.

2. If it does not come out spontaneously, ask what people were feeling as they heard the instructions for the first time and as they started to leave the circle to separate as couples.

In what ways did your feelings about the group experience change from session to session? Any suggestions about what was very helpful

and what was not particularly helpful?

Let's go around the group and each of us take this opportunity to say something final to the group regarding what we are feeling.

APPENDIX B

THE LOVING BEHAVIOR INVENTORY (LBI)

MALE AND FEMALE FORMS

APPENDIX B

In this series of statements, you will be considering relationship behaviors. Your answers will not be shown to your spouse. Please answer as honestly and accurately as you can.

Circle the number which represents how seldom or how often the follow- occur:

	Very Seldom			Some			Very Often
1. I show an interest in listening to her or her interests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I say or do things which let her know that I value and appreciate her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. In a clear and definite manner, I let her know that I would enjoy doing something or going somewhere with her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I involve myself in activities I enjoy which do not include her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I tell her that she is loved.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. In a clear and definite manner, I let her know I desire a sexually pleasuring experience with her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. During our times of sexual pleasuring, I let her know that she is pleasing me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(L.B.I. form Ms)
c E.B. Branch, Jr., 1973

Circle the number which represents how seldom or how often the following occur:

	Very Seldom			Some			Very Often
1. She shows an interest in listening to me or my interests:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. She says or does things which let me know that she values and appreciates me:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. In a clear and definite manner, she lets me know that she would enjoy doing something or going somewhere with me:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. She involves herself in activities she enjoys which do not include me:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. She tells me that I am loved:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. In a clear and definite manner she lets me know that she wants a sexually pleasuring experience with me:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. During our times of sexual pleasuring, she lets me know that I am pleasing her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(L.B.I. form Mo)
c E.B. Branch, Jr., 1973

Circle the number which represents how seldom or how often the following occur:

	Very Seldom			Some			Very Often
1. I think she sees my behavior of showing an interest in listening to her or her interests as occurring:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I think she sees my behavior of saying or doing things which let her know that I value and appreciate her as occurring:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think she sees my behavior of clearly and definitely letting her know that I would enjoy doing something with her as occurring:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I think she sees my involving myself in activities which do not include her as occurring:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I think she sees my behavior of telling her she is loved as occurring:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I think she sees my behavior of clearly and definitely letting her know I desire a sexually pleasuring experience with her as occurring:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I think she sees my behavior of letting her know she is pleasing me during our times of sexual pleasuring as occurring:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(L.B.I. form Mpo)
c E.B. Branch, Jr., 1973

APPENDIX B

In this series of statements, you will be considering relationship behaviors. Your answers will not be shown to your spouse. Please answer as honestly and accurately as you can.

Circle the number which represents <u>how seldom or how often</u> the following occur:

	Very Seldom			Some			Very Often
1. I show an interest in listening to him or his interests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I say or do things which let him know that I value and appreciate him.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. In a clear and definite manner, I let him know that I would enjoy doing something or going somewhere with him.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I involve myself in activities I enjoy which do not include him.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I tell him that he is loved.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. In a clear and definite manner, I let him know I desire a sexually pleasuring experience with him.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. During our times of sexual pleasuring, I let him know that he is pleasing me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(L.B.I. form Fs)
c E.B. Branch, Jr., 1973

Circle the number which represents how seldom or how often the following occur:

	Very Seldom			Some			Very Often
1. He shows an interest in listening to me or my interests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. He says or does things which let me know that he values and appreciates me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. In a clear and definite manner, he lets me know that he would enjoy doing something or going somewhere with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. He involves himself in activities he enjoys which do not include me:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. He tells me that I am loved.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. In a clear and definite manner he lets me know that he wants a sexually pleasuring experience with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. During our times of sexual pleasuring, he lets me know that I am pleasing him.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(L.B.I. form Fo)
c E.B. Branch, Jr., 1973

Circle the number which represents how seldom or how often the following occur:

		Very Seldom			Some			Very Often
1.	I think he sees my behavior of showing an interest in listening to him or his interests as occurring.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I think he sees my behavior of saying or doing things which let him know that I value and appreciate him as occurring.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I think he sees my behavior of clearly and definitely letting him know that I would enjoy doing something or going somewhere with him as occurring.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I think he sees my involving myself in activities which do not include him as occurring.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I think he sees my behavior of telling him he is loved as occurring.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I think he sees my behavior of clearly and definitely letting him know I desire a sexually pleasuring experience with him as occurring.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I think he sees my behavior of letting him know he is pleasing me during our times of sexual pleasuring as occurring.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(L.B.I. form Fpo)
c E.B. Branch, Jr., 1973

APPENDIX C

THE SELF-DISCLOSURE QUESTIONNAIRE (SDQ)

APPENDIX C

In this series of questions, you will be considering some personal and private matters. Your answers will not be shown to your spouse. We would like you to answer these questions as honestly and accurately as you can.

Circle the number which represents how little or how much you tell your spouse about:

	Very Seldom		Some				Very Much
1. When you feel especially proud or pleased with yourself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. When you feel worried about something.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. How you feel when you recognize your spouse understands what you mean.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. When you feel proud or pleased with your spouse.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. How you feel when you and your spouse disagree about something.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. How you feel when your spouse behaves in some way you like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. When your feelings are hurt by something your spouse does.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. When you feel discouraged or blue.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. When you feel happy about something.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Feelings about your own sexual attractiveness to your spouse.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Aspects of your own personality that you like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Very Seldom			Some			Very Much
12. How you feel when you do not understand what your spouse means.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Your sexual feelings toward your spouse.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Aspects of your personality that you dislike.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. How you feel when you agree with your spouse.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Your sexual feelings toward persons besides your spouse.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. When you have difficulty expressing your feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. How you feel when your spouse does something nice for you.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. How you feel when your spouse behaves in a way you do not like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. When you feel excited about something.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(S.D.Q.)
c Miller, Nunnally, Wackman

APPENDIX D

LETTER AND FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX D

Department of Educational Psychology
Faculty of Education
University of Alberta

Dear

I am writing you with regard to the Marriage Enrichment Program in which you participated during the month of February 1974. As you recall, you completed a number of questionnaires in the interests of research on the effectiveness of the program. Your cooperation in this research project has been much appreciated as the results have contributed to my own thesis for my Master's degree in Education, as well as providing valuable information on the Marriage Enrichment Program.

At this point in assessing the program, it is apparent that evaluation of the program by participants is necessary in order to complete the assessment of the effectiveness of the program. As the Marriage Enrichment Program has been developed to provide a service to interested members of the public, it is important to know whether the program has been useful and informative to you as a former participant. With this in mind, I am again requesting your cooperation in completing the enclosed questionnaire.

When completing the questionnaire, please answer all questions in your own words, independently of your partner. Feel free to comment on any of the questions but please return the questionnaire as soon as possible whether all questions are completely answered or not. As with the previous questionnaires, the information is used only for research purposes with names and other identifying data remaining completely confidential.

Any persons interested in their own results on the previous questionnaires may discuss this with me by phoning 432-5807 during weekdays or 433-5444 from 6:00 to 8:00 in the evening.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours truly,

Carol E. Anderson
Graduate Student

Please fill out this questionnaire without consulting your partner. Answer as honestly and completely as possible.

Name: _____

1. How did you find out about the Marriage Enrichment Program?

   Radio_____ T.V._____ Newspaper_____

   Other Persons_____ Other (please indicate)_____

2. Why did you choose to participate in the Marriage Enrichment Program?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. (a) Did you attend all the sessions of the program?

   yes_____ no_____

   (b) If not, briefly indicate your reasons for your decision not to attend.

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. Comment briefly as to how instructional or beneficial, to you and/or your relationship, you found the following aspects of the program. In the brackets provided, rank the aspects from most useful (1) to least useful (5).

   (a) Exercises ( )

   _____

   _____

   _____

(b) The Two-to-One Game ( )

(c) Group Leaders ( )

(d) Log Book ( )

(e) Related Reading ( )

5. Do you make use of anything learned during the program,

(a) Within your relationship with your partner? Yes_____ No_____

Briefly explain your answer.

(b) Outside of this relationship? Yes_____ No_____

Briefly explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. As a result of completing the Marriage Enrichment Program do you:

(a) Share what you like about your partner?

more often than before _____

about the same as before _____

less often than before _____

(b) Share your feelings, both positive and negative, with your partner?

more often than before _____

about the same as before _____

less often than before _____

7. (a) As a result of the program, is there anything you discovered about yourself that you hadn't anticipated? Yes_____ No_____

(b) If you did, briefly explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. (a) As a result of the program, did you discover anything about your partner that you weren't previously aware of? Yes___ No___

   (b) If you did, briefly explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. Briefly explain in what way, if any, the experience of the program has made a difference in your relationship with your partner.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. (a) When you decided to take it, what did you expect to get out of the program for yourself?

_____

_____

_____

   (b) To what extent were these expectations realized?

_____

_____

_____

11. (a) What did you hope to achieve in your relationship with your partner?

_____

_____

_____

(b) To what extent were these goals realized?

_____

_____

_____

12. In your opinion, what were the strengths and weaknesses of the program?

(a) Strengths

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

(b) Weaknesses

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

13. In the space provided, make any suggestions that you think might improve the program.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. (a) Would you recommend the program to other couples?

Yes_____ No_____ Maybe_____

(b) Please explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. How did you react to completing the questionnaires given out in the final session of the program?

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANTS' WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX E

2. Why did you choose to participate in the Marriage Enrichment Program?

"I chose to participate hoping that I would learn to communicate better."

"- Personal Growth
- Enrich our Relationship
- Develop/Improve Communications".

"- strengthen our relationship
- maintain a happy relationship"

"Thought it would help marriage communication."

"Part of the group leadership program"

"Thought we could explore our relationship through skills offered by the course."

"Because I believe there is room for enrichment in all marriages."

"Trouble with family."

"Wife suggested it and seemed like good idea as we weren't communicating well."

"I felt it might draw my husband and self closer together when I was feeling a need for more support."

"I felt that after seven years of marriage, we required a little professional information on marriage (i.e., some outside views)."

"It was winter and I was bored, thought this would be something partner and I could do together."

"To help further our relationship."

"Thought it would be interesting and informative."

4. Comment briefly as to how instructional or beneficial, to you and/or your relationship, you found the following aspects of the program.

(a) Exercises

"Very good, especially the sharing seat."

"Most useful because we shared ourselves and our relationship with the others and got feedback from them."

"Found these helpful in understanding some of the problems I had had. Also found these made me realize how few - positive efforts are made in our relationships."

"Practical Applications - Icebreakers for difficult situations/ topics."

"Made one think."

"Put more thought in it because things had to be written. More concentration required."

"Improved communication - we both had similar goals."

"Feelings are expressed more fully in group discussion than in private discussion."

"Made you think; when and how you were taking your partner for granted."

4. (b) The Two-to-One Game

"Played it when we were taking the course - haven't used it in months - lost interest in it."

"Could have been left out."

"It was interesting, but not particularly beneficial."

"Hard to find time for game."

"A good idea but confusing at times."

"Used about 3 nites. OK but not real life."

"Excellent!! Good start for more difficult conversations - a non-threatening game that leads to more intimate topics. Great icebreaker."

"Enjoyed the game during sessions but we have not used it since."

"Enjoyable...learned about myself and partner through answers given. Not always a good guesser."

"Enjoyed playing the game as entertainment; also indicated some areas we did not know we didn't agree on; but mostly was an exercise in guessing how your partner guesses."

"Expressing feelings for other people, passed on 'Two-to-One' Game."

4. (c) Group Leaders

"Our leaders were excellent - kept whole group involved."

"Their openness encouraged everyone else to be open - easy to relate to with regard to day to day living, etc."

"Excellent examples shown."

"Very good; brought group together at ease."

"Good."

"Had the sessions under control. Stuck to the issues and program. Impartial throughout (Group Leaders)."

"Found very helpful at putting me at ease and learning to talk about problems."

"Emphasis on them as members of the group and not 'leaders' was good. Had to do the work ourselves."

"Enjoyed being with group leaders. A lot of 'instructional' learning as far as openness and expression of feelings."

4. (d) Log Book (2)

"It made me think of good 'day to day' things that had happened between my husband and myself - enjoyed thinking about the questions that were asked."

"Good to look back on or to think about after."

"Was left to last day and then done in a hurry."

"Good idea to read over what your thoughts were at times."

"Good for review."

"Forced one to think about themselves and their relationship."

"Sometimes hard to fill in. Not too many positive things done in a week."

"Made me appreciate what partner does for me more. Was already quite aware of the areas in sexuality."

"Helped me think about our relationship in concrete terms... i.e., had to write things down...focussed things."

4. (e) Related Reading

"Of the eight who commented, seven indicated that they did not do any of the outside reading."

"Not much read but found to be thought provoking."

5. Do you make use of anything learned during the program?

(a) Within your relationship with your partner? Yes ✓

Briefly explain your answer.

"Aware of how important expression of appreciation is."

"Continued with massage, keeping wife aware of things we do for each other, easier to express our feelings when we're with others."

"I think I am better able to express my feelings."

"Communications have improved. Feelings more open. New areas opened for sharing with others."

"Showing appreciation more often for spouse. Air problems and discuss them more effectively."

"Communication has improved some. I pay more attention to what my wife is trying to say."

"Try to be more direct in my approach on various matters."

"Talk more openly - better understanding."

"We try to spend more time together sharing feelings."

"Give wife credit for more things that I like about her."

5. (a) Within your relationship with your partner?

Briefly explain your answer.

"With problems now we can sit down and discuss them."

"I try to show more of an interest in partner and I hope my comments aren't as destructive as before."

"I concentrate on the good things in our marriage - respect the fact that partner is just as sensitive as I am but just doesn't verbalize or discuss his feelings the way I do."

5. (b) Outside of this relationship?

Briefly explain.

"I still am a pessimist - a negative person. I'd like to be able to say only nice things about people but I'm still hypercritical."

"Believe it helps me understand people better."

"We have discussed the course with our friends - many interesting discussions resulted. Most females were very interested but the males really didn't want to discuss it."

"Opening myself up to others/more confidence."

"Has helped to try to appreciate feelings of our daughter."

"Get things out into open."

7. (a) As a result of the program, is there anything you discovered about yourself that you hadn't anticipated? Yes ✓

(b) If you did, briefly explain.

"I interact actively or passively with whomever is speaking in a group and tend to ignore those who don't talk, which in this case means partner."

"We don't share much of the feeling part of our relationship with other people but keep it mainly to ourselves."

"I discovered that my interpretation of a situation was very often different than that of others."

"My feelings seemed to show (to others) more than I thought they were."

"That I would enjoy participation in a mixed group of strangers."

"I discovered I was having difficulty dealing with many feelings and since have entered some intensive psychotherapy--thus the reason for failing to return second set of questionnaires as I could no longer handle honestly."

"Liked being married more than I had previously thought."

"I can talk to people more freely now (basically about myself and our relationship."

8. (a) As a result of the program, did you discover anything about your partner that you weren't previously aware of? Yes_____

(b) If you did, briefly explain.

"I discovered that he understood and appreciated my situation more than I thought he did."

"Pleasantly surprised by wife's reaction to this type of program. I didn't think she would open up the way she did. Probably the best thing that happened for us."

"That she likes to talk a lot and assume a teacher-like role."

"That he was embarrassed and uncomfortable about things that I thought he was confident about."

"Does not always mean what she says."

"She seems to be unable to get or feel any sense of satisfaction from her endeavours."

"He feels much more deeply and was much more aware of me than I ever appreciated."

"Discovered my wife was interested in developing our marriage beyond the point it was at."

"I didn't discover really anything about (partner) that I didn't know before, but I think I learned to understand and appreciate our personality differences."

9. Briefly explain in what way, if any, the experience of the program has made a difference in your relationship with your partner.

"I am more able to be 'with' (partner) in a group rather than isolated - the shared group experience in itself, as well as more specifically the sharing seat exercise I think helped in this."

"Made us more aware of the uniqueness of our relationship, of the things we do to say we love each other, focused on a lot of feeling emotions between us."

"I feel that we are a bit more open but that we require a little more effort to make this continue."

"More open communication. Not as difficult to share feelings for me. More understanding of each. All areas still could use more openness, but I believe it will come with time and practice."

"More loving and giving relationship."

"Believe we are somewhat more compatible, knowing that other people have their problems."

"To show more patience and tolerance."

"Periods of strained relationship are shorter."

"We are much more open with each other."

"More relaxed, understanding, comfortable, trusting, secure."

"I can tell (partner) how I feel about him physically; i.e., how he affects me both positively and negatively."

"We work harder at communicating together, fully understanding how really important it is."

"I am much more emotional now towards our relationship."

10. (a) When you decided to take it, what did you expect to get out of the program for yourself?

(b) To what extent were these expectations realized?

(a) "better communications."
(b) "partly realized; ongoing toward goal."

(a) "increased ability to express feelings."
(b) "during the group I was able to express feelings more 'fluently'. I'm having a hard time evaluating whether I do express more or not now."

(a) "no expectations, more or less see what happens."
(b) "We had some enjoyable nights and some very flat nights. Felt both good and bad about the course."

(a) "I hoped to be able to communicate more openly."
(b) "I was able to learn a few skills, but I will have to work at putting them to use."

(a) "Feedback from wife as to her views of our relationship and her needs/desires/etc."
(b) "Completely."

(a) "A better understanding and thus avoid arguments and bickering."
(b) "Some improvement."

(a) "Better understanding of the marriage relationship."
(b) "Communication improved and more awareness of hangups."

(a) "How to understand and enjoy my partner."
(b) "Some success."

(a) "Better family relationship - more open."
(b) "Relationship more open, maybe better."

(a) "Expected to learn more about my husband's position."
(b) "Quite fully."

(a) "An amount of technical and statistical information."
(b) "Practically nil. Not that type of program, at least for me."

(a) "More conversation from (partner). Also I wanted (partner) to be able to tell me he loved me more easily, frequently."
(b) "It worked for a while but now we seem to be almost at square one again."

(a) "Partner wanted to take program--I was along for the ride (keep peace in the family."

(a) "Was rather pessimistic - but curious."
(b) "Was very pleasantly surprised. I thought the group participation was great--everyone (though really strangers) really 'talked' about very personal things."

11. (a) What did you hope to achieve in your relationship with your partner?

(b) To what extent were these goals realized?

(a) "More togetherness in a group."
(b) "I am more aware of how I interact. I think this was realized; i.e., I feel more together."

(a) "Hoped to increase communication of feelings between us and feel comfortable sharing our relationship with other people." "Found program very adequate in fulfilling these."

(a) "Better communication."
(b) "Some improvement, but constant work required."

(a) "Open/honest/sincere communications."
(b) "More than I expected. --Not complete yet--requires constant effort from both of us--hard to break old habits."

(a) "Good communication--closer, tender relationship."
(b) "Nearly completed and ongoing."

(a) "Better communication."
(b) "Some improvement."

(a) "Closer feeling and more togetherness and deeper understanding of one another."
(b) "Some improvement."

(a) "More trust and understanding."
(b) "At times she makes an attempt to get closer."

(a) "A closer, sharing relationship."
(b) "We are still working towards this goal with more awareness of the roadblocks we set up."

(a) "As I recall, a better understanding of why we decided to 'travel together through life' and continued to do so."
(b) "Very well, considering the relatively few, in my opinion, meetings assigned to such a complex subject."

(a) "More meaningful conversaton; i.e., I wanted to know how (partner) really felt about things."
(b) "I have to prod for his feelings but he does verbalize them occasionally."

(a) "Just strengthen the relationship."
(b) "Our relationship is much stronger than before the classes."

(a) "Better communication and understanding."
(b) "Am pleased with the results - but it's a full time job, working at it together."

12. In your opinion, what were the strengths and weaknesses of the program?

(a) Strengths

1. "Group leaders"
2. "Sharing exercises"
3. "Emphasis on feeling words"

1. "Focus on sharing feelings and emotions in exercises"
2. "Good approach to sexuality and sensuality (marriage, etc.)"
3. "Good to get people so involved in such a short period of time rather than having group leaders do all the work"

1. "Very general; no specific problems discussed"

1. "Non-threatening"
2. "Sessions dealt with generalities common to all"
3. "Offered suggestions - not solutions"

1. "Positive attitude stressed"
2. "Appreciation/respect for one another"
3. "Hot seat session - good perspective"

1. "Personal participation with the group"
2. "Well organized"
3. "Timing in winter was good"

1. "Made a person think back to what attracted them to each other"
2. "Opportunity for group discussion"
3. "The film on sex education"

1. "Frank discussion"
2. "Realizing others have problems also"

1. "Exercises and discussion"
2. "Film and discussion"
3. "Readers"

1. "We were in a comfortable home setting which made it easier to share"

1. "Comparison with other couples"
2. "Small group - ease of access to group leader"
3. "Downtown location convenient
4. "Developed new friendships"

1. "Meeting others who had similar goals"
2. "Accentuating the positive in a marriage"
3. "(Group leaders) made the program - they're a lovely couple"

1. "Group Leaders"
2. "Some of the work sheets"
3. "Open discussion"

1. "The stress that was placed on emphasizing the good things in the relationship"
2. "The easy and casual atmosphere"
3. "The 'no hassle' attitude with the subjects - if you wanted to participate - 'great' - if you didn't - 'no hassle'

12. (b) Weaknesses

1. "Not long enough"

1. "More time for sensuality part of program"

1. "Too short"

1. "Course was too short"

1. " 'Homework' often is not done"

1. "Testing before classes"
2. "Screening of applicants"

1. "Program was too short"

1. "Some people were too lengthy when speaking"
2. "The first two 'lectures' didn't seem to be goal-oriented"

1. "Individual sessions too short"
2. "Lack of continuity with some members of group who dropped out (i.e., could not follow where they were going; this could not apply to our case)"

1. "One needs to be aware only feelings will be dealt with, not detail"

13. In the space provided, make any suggestions that you think might improve the program.

"Longer than 6 weeks"

"One more evening for sensuality"

" - longer
- perhaps another session or sessions after a few months"

"stress importance of doing homework"

"utilize Two-to-One game more often; more stimulating films (such as one used on Sexual Relations) - an excellent film"

"1. a longer period of group communication might have improved situation even if for shorter periods of time. Found that I forget much of the good advice.
2. more clues on how people are supposed to act and react."

"Make program over longer period of time"

"Include people of roughly the same age in one group"

14. (a) Would you recommend the program to other couples? Yes_____

(b) Please explain your answer.

"Seemed extremely beneficial to couples in 30-35 year group - from their responses (i.e., 10 years married). For newer relationships, I see it almost as a preventative training in how to keep a relationship open"

"Thought our relationship was very well developed in areas of communication and sharing feelings but found the program helped us focus a bit more in these areas and this was beneficial to us. Others could use this, I'm sure."

"Does what it says it will do - nothing more - nothing less - reasonable price. Good experience for all relationships - allows for a needed evaluation from time to time"

"During the course I was very impressed with (group leaders) and their handling of the session that I recommended the course to several people. The fact that I felt comfortable in their surroundings and was able to talk more openly than usual was a very big factor"

"Makes couple see positive characteristics of spouse and enriches their relationship"

"Believe it would be helpful to any married couple"

"Beneficial to many people"

"Gives each partner a better insight into how the other views various aspects of the marriage and other aspects of life during working/non-working periods"

"It does any couple good to take a couple of hours a week to tell each other how they feel or have changed towards the other person. It's a real ego-lifter to hear my husband tell me that he appreciates me and what I do for him"

"We thoroughly enjoyed the course and have recommended it to lots of our friends"

15. How did you react to completing the questionnaires given out in the final session of the program?

"Found myself trying to recall answers.
Not too much of an effort"

"O.K. since it was feedback on the program. I wanted to let them know what I got out of it"

"I don't remember these specifically but do not remember any problem completing any of the questionnaires"

"Favourably"

"Don't remember doing them. If you mean the 16 PF's/etc. I did them because it was requested - no great task"

"No problem - got used to it"

"Fine with me. Would like to know how close the answers were to the original questionnaire."

"No problem -- it may help myself as well as others. Some recollection is rather dim as we had extensive counselling afterwards"

"Positively - were completed and then disappeared before were rated"

"Negatively as explained 7 (b)"

"Resignation, a sense of duty, reluctance at the start - exhilaration, satisfaction, pleasure and a pat on the back to myself at the end"

"I can't honestly remember filling out any unless it was the multiple choice things I did at home and I felt they were a bit of a lark, but if someone wanted to use them for furthering their education, then O.K. with me"